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# CHILD TRAINING

(IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY.)

The one topic they find fascinating is—"how shall we make children happier than they are."

*Flowers & Gardens*

Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter neckedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home :  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !

*Wordsworth.*

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EDITED BY

PROF. R. K. KULKARNI,

*Honorary Secretary,*

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**1918.**

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**“ When we know what we want and desire it determinedly and promptly, we nearly always attain our object.”**

*Mignet, French Reformer.*

## INTRODUCTION.

The object in bringing together in the form of this little book the stray writings of some of the leading theosophists is to place within the reach of the ordinary reader some ideas,—from the point of view of the Divine Wisdom,—as to how children are constituted and how they can best be trained and brought up. Theosophical investigation has shown that the child is not simply a tender physical body to be fed, clad, and taken care of; it has shown that it is a soul possessing three more or less organised vehicles, necessary for the expression of its life. Theosophy has made clear and definite the *rationale* of the emotional and mental aspects of child-life which Western Psychology in its slow and faltering search after the inner life through the outer physical phenomena has but dimly perceived.

If we are to succeed in the endeavour to train children, the fact has to be thoroughly grasped that they are souls as old—if not older—in their latent powers as ourselves and that it is our sacred duty to help them in evolving those powers. They bring with them, as the result of their past experience, the tendencies to good or evil and we have to be by our own example and the means at our disposal the suitable environment necessary to shape and encourage their growth. It is in our power to cultivate in the child right feeling and thought by creating around him an atmosphere of love

and trust. We can also suppress, or even root out, the evil tendencies by firmly but gently persisting in an agreeable presentation of the right view of things. As Mr. C. W. Leadbeater shows in the sequel, the germs of evil can be starved out by giving free play early in childhood to those of good and by helping the child to form good habits.

The truths stated in this book have been put into practice by many members of the Theosophical society all over the world ; Mr. G. S. Arundale vindicated their supreme value to the teacher during his Principalship of the Central Hindu College, Benares, for more than ten years ; Dr. Armstrong Smith has been conducting his Garden City Theosophical School, London, in the light of them ; the Theosophical Educational Trust in India, now transformed into the National Education Trust, is a monument of successful experiment under a variety of circumstances. One thing must be stated here for the encouragement of hesitating parents and teachers—that it is the most delightful thing in the world to assist the child intelligently and sympathetically in acquiring control over its thoughts and feelings. The stream of gratitude and loving trust pouring forth from a heart growing daily more conscious of timely help selflessly given fills the guiding elder's life with a happiness, unsurpassed in any other walk of life.

At this time children are being born into the world that are observed to be very sensitive and prone to

suffer much from slight carelessness on the part of guardians and teachers. Brutality or harshness, whether intentional or unintentional injures them to an extent the elders do not imagine. As Mr C. W. Leadbeater shows, it wrecks their whole lives, breaking to pieces all that is beautiful and noble in them.

Not a few parents have remarked that these sensitive children get confused or irritated when roughly handled; in course of time they begin to grow dull and unresponsive and even miserable; but when kindly treated they are quick and sensible in their response; their faces glow with a joy that makes for health and intelligence. "While I was at school," states one Headmaster, "boys used to forget hard caning immediately after the operation was over; but now I see boys who lose their sleep for a whole night over a harsh word spoken to them during school hours." This book will have served its purpose if, owing to the enlightenment it brings to parents and teachers, such boys and girls are saved from injurious shocks to their delicately balanced nervous systems.

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GWALIOR, C. I.,  
30th October 1918.

R. K. KULKARNI,  
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Teachers.*



## CHAPTER I.

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### OUR RELATION TO CHILDREN.

From the Theosophic standpoint the subject of our relation to children is an exceedingly important and practical one. If we realise the purpose for which the \*ego descends into incarnation, and if we know to how great an extent its attainment of that purpose depends upon the training given to its various vehicles during their childhood and growth, we cannot but feel that a tremendous responsibility attaches to all who are in any way connected with children, whether as parents, elder relatives, or teachers. It is well, therefore, that we should consider what hints Theosophy can give us as to the way in which we can best discharge this responsibility.

What is the present condition of our relation to children—to boys, at any rate—here in the midst of our

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\* Ego is जीवात्मा (*Jeevātmā*) who, as the Hindu knows, (चतुर्विधशरीराणि धृत्वा मुक्त्वा सहस्रयः) comes to the earth again and again, each time taking on four perishable bodies, physical (स्थूल), Etheric (प्राणमय), astral or emotional (वासनामय or मनोमय) and mental (ज्ञानमय). What is called सूक्ष्मदेह is the astral and mental bodies working together under the domination of desire as in the case of the average man. कारण or विज्ञानमय देह is his vehicle lasting him through several incarnations and storing up his experience gathered through ages in the shape of qualities.

European civilization? The practical result of nineteen centuries of ostensibly Christian teaching is that our boys live among us as an alien race, with laws and rules of life of their own entirely different from ours, and with a code of morals of their own, also entirely different from that by which we consider ourselves bound. They regard grown up people (in the mass) with scarcely veiled hostility, or, at the best, with a kind of armed neutrality, and always with deep distrust, as foreigners whose motives are incomprehensible to them, and whose actions are perpetually interfering in the most unwarrantable and apparently malicious manner with their right to enjoy themselves in their own way.

This may sound rather a startling statement to those who have never considered the matter, but any parent who has boys at one of our large schools will appreciate the truth of it; and if he can look back to his own school-days, and in thought realise once more the feelings and conditions of that period (which most of us have so entirely forgotten) he will recognise, perhaps with a start of surprise, that it is not an inaccurate description of what his own attitude once was.

Wherever the laws and customs of this race (living among us, yet not of us) differ from ours, they are invariably a reversion to an earlier type, and tend in the direction of primitive savagery—a fact which might be cited in support of the Theosophical theory that in each incarnation, before the ego has acquired control

of his vehicles, the earlier stages of our evolution are hurriedly run through once more. The only right recognised among them is the right of the strongest; the boy who rules their little state is not the best boy, nor the cleverest boy, but the one who can fight best; and their leadership is usually decided by combat, just as it is to this day among many a savage tribe.

Their code of morals is distinctly their own, and though it cannot be so directly paralleled among primitive races as some of their other customs, it is decidedly on a lower level than even our own. To oppress and ill-treat the weak, and even torture them to the utmost limit of endurance, seems to be thought a comparatively innocent form of recreation, and it would be only an unusually severe case which would arouse even a passing manifestation of public opinion against the offender. The theft of money is, happily, regarded as contemptible, but the theft of fruit or jam is not; nor, indeed, would the stealing of anything eatable be considered criminal. Falsehood of the most outrageous kind is considered as not only allowable but amusing, when practised upon some too-credulous youngster; if resorted to in order to conceal from an adult the misdeeds of a fellow-criminal it is often looked upon as heroic and noble. But the most heinous crime of all—the very lowest abyss of turpitude—is to call in the intervention of a grown-up person to right even the most flagrant of wrongs; and many a weak and nervous child endures agonies both physically and mentally from



the barbarity of bullies without breathing a word of his sufferings either to parent or teacher—so deep is the distrust with which public opinion amongst boys regards the hostile race of adults.

In spite of the terrible suffering which it frequently entails upon the weak and sensitive boy, I am in no way blind to the good side of public-school life—to the courage and self-reliance which it gives to the strong and hardy lad, and the training in the command of others with which it provides the members of its higher forms. I suppose that England is the only country on earth where the maintenance of order in the small world of school life can be (and is) left practically in the hands of boys themselves, and there is much in this to be highly commended; but I am at present concerned with the relations between boys as a class and adults as a class, and it can hardly be denied that on the whole these are somewhat strained, the distrust of which I have spoken on the one side being frequently met by dislike and entire want of comprehension on the other.

Many a man (or woman) thinks of boys only as noisy, dirty, greedy, clumsy, selfish and generally objectionable; and he never realises that there may be a good deal of selfishness in this point of view of his, and that if any part of his indictment is true, the fault is not so much in the boys themselves as in the unreasonable way in which they have been brought up; furthermore, that in any case his duty is not to widen the

chasm between them and himself by adopting an attitude of dislike and distrust, but rather to endeavour to improve the position of affairs by judicious kindness and hearty, patient friendliness and sympathy.

Surely there is something wrong about such unsatisfactory relations; surely some improvement might be brought about in this unfortunate condition of mutual hostility and mistrust. There are honourable exceptions; there are boys who trust their masters, and masters who trust their boys, and I myself have never found any difficulty in winning the confidence of the juveniles by treating them properly; but in a sadly large number of instances the case is as I have described it.

That it need not be so is shown not only by the exceptions mentioned above, but by the condition of affairs which we find existing in some Oriental lands. I have not yet had the pleasure of visiting the Empire of Japan, but I hear from those who have been there and have made some study of this question, that there is no country in the world where children are so well and so sensibly treated—where their relations with their elders are so completely satisfactory. Harshness, it is said, is entirely unknown, yet the children in no way presume upon the gentleness of the older people.

Indeed, no properly treated child ever does or ever would so presume in any country. If he could do so, it would be a clear indication that the adult had failed in his management. All harshness in the treatment of

children is a relic of savagery ; it may be that when we were at the level of the stone-age we knew no better, but in these days of supposed enlightenment it is simply criminal. The intentional infliction of pain upon any living creature is one of the most serious of sins, and the karma which follows upon it is of the most appalling character. The suggestion that it is intended to produce a good result is no excuse whatever ; in this case, as in all others, it can never be right to do evil that good may come. And that quite apart from the fact that good never does come. Nothing but the most horrible evil results from the common delusion on this subject.

The whole thing is an abomination which cries to heaven for a remedy, just as is the ghastly ceaseless slaughter of animals in order that men may degrade themselves by putting into their bodies a peculiarly unsuitable and objectionable form of food. In both these cases—the ill-treatment of children and the slaughter of animals—we in England are in a condition of absolute barbarism ; and the men of the future, looking back upon this time will find it impossible to understand how such utterly horrible practices could co-exist with the knowledge of philosophy, ethics and religion which we possess. Our eyes are blinded to the wickedness of these things by the glamour of custom ; but any one who studies the hidden side of things soon learns that custom is an entirely unreliable guide and that he must face the facts of nature as they are, and not as ignorant people suppose them to be.

This almost universal cruelty to children is the reason for the lack of confidence between them and adults ; if we treat them as savages we are doing our best to induce them to act as savages. The incompetent parent or teacher pretends that he intentionally injures a child with a view to correcting his faults ; if he knew anything of the real facts of life he would be aware that the effect of such injury is in every case far worse than that of the fault which he imagines himself to be trying to correct. His method is so entirely irrational that it seems to the occultist like the crazy inconsequence of a nightmare—all the more so when we think of the vast mass of hatred, hostility and misunderstanding for which it is responsible.

But how, it may be asked, is it proposed that this position of mutual mistrust and misunderstanding should be improved ? Well, it is evident that in cases where this breach already exists, it can only be bridged over by unwearying kindness, and by gradual, patient but constant efforts to promote a better understanding by steadily showing unselfish affection and sympathy ; in fact, by habitually putting ourselves in the child's place and trying to realize exactly how all these matters appear to him. If we, who are adults, had not so entirely forgotten our own childish days, we should make far greater allowances for the children of to-day, and should understand and get on with them much better.

This is, however, emphatically one of the cases in which the old proverb holds good, which tells us that

prevention is better than cure. If we will but take a little trouble to begin in the right way with our children from the first, we shall easily be able to avoid the undesirable state of affairs which we have been describing. And this is exactly where Theosophy has many a valuable hint to offer to those who are in earnest in wishing to do their duty by the young ones committed to their charge.

### THE DUTY OF PARENTS.

The absolute nature of this duty of parents and teachers towards children must first be recognized. It cannot be too strongly or too repeatedly insisted upon that parentage is an exceedingly heavy responsibility of a religious nature, however lightly and thoughtlessly it may often be undertaken. Those who bring a child into the world make themselves directly responsible to the law of karma for the opportunities of evolution which they ought to give to that ego, and heavy indeed will be their penalty if by their carelessness or selfishness they put hindrances in his path, or fail to render him all the help and guidance which he has a right to expect from them. Yet how often the modern parent entirely ignores this obvious responsibility ; how often a child is to him nothing but a cause of fatuous vanity or an object of thoughtless neglect !

If we want to understand our duty towards the child we must first consider how he came to be what

he is ; we must trace him back in thought to his previous incarnation. Whatever may have been his outward circumstances at that time, he had a definite disposition of his own—a character containing various more or less developed qualities, some good and some bad.

In due course of time that life of his came to an end ; but whether that end came slowly by disease or old age, or swiftly by some accident or violence, its advent made no sudden change of any sort in his character. A curious delusion seems to prevail in many quarters that the mere fact of death at once turns a demon into a saint—that, whatever a man's life may have been, the moment he dies he becomes practically an angel of goodness. No idea could possibly be further from the truth, as those whose work lies in trying to help the departed know full well. The casting off of a man's physical body no more alters his disposition than does the casting off of his overcoat ; he is precisely the same man the day after his death as he was the day before, with the same vices and the same virtues.

True, now that he is functioning only in the astral world he has not the same opportunities of displaying them ; but though they may manifest themselves in the astral life in a different manner, they are none the less still there, and the conditions and duration of that life are their result. In that world he must stay until the energy poured forth by his lower desires and emotions during physical life has worn itself

out—until the astral body which he has made for himself disintegrates; for only then can he leave it for the higher and more peaceful realm of the heaven-world. But though those particular passions are for the time worn out and done with for him, the germs of the qualities in him, which made it possible for them to exist in his nature, are still there. They are latent and ineffective, certainly, because desire of that type requires astral matter for its manifestation; they are what Madame Blavatsky once called “privations of matter,” but they are quite ready to come into renewed activity, if stimulated, when the man again finds himself under conditions where they can act.

An analogy may perhaps, if not pushed too far, be of use in helping us to grasp this idea. If a small bell be made to ring continuously in an air-tight vessel, and the air be then gradually withdrawn, the sound will grow fainter and fainter, until it becomes inaudible. The bell is still ringing as vigorously as ever, yet its vibration is no longer manifest to our ears, because the medium by means of which alone it can produce any effect upon them is absent. Admit the air to the vessel, and immediately you hear the sound of the bell once more just as before.

Similarly, there are certain qualities in man's nature which need astral matter for their manifestation, just as sound needs either air or some denser matter for its vehicle; and when, in the process of his withdrawal into

himself after what we call death, he leaves the astral world for the mental, those qualities can no longer find expression, and must, therefore, perforce remain latent. But when, \*centuries later, on his downward course into reincarnation he re-enters the astral realm, these qualities which have remained latent for so long manifest themselves once more, and become the tendencies of the next personality.\*

In the same way there are qualities of the mind which need for their expression the matter of the lower \*mental levels; and when, after his long rest in the heaven-world, the consciousness of the man withdraws into the true ego upon the higher mental levels, these qualities also pass into latency.

But when the ego is about to reincarnate, he has to reverse this process of withdrawal—to pass downward through the very same worlds through which he came on his upward journey. When the time of his outflow comes, he puts himself down first on to the lower levels of his own world, and seeks to express himself there, as far as is possible in that less perfect and less plastic matter. In order that he may so express himself and function in that world, he must clothe himself in its matter.

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\* Theosophical investigation into the past lives of some egos has proved the fact contained in प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वा शश्वतीः समाः, Geeta VI. 40, that a *jeevātmā* passes centuries in the स्वर्ग or heaven world working into faculties the material (पुण्य) gathered during his life on earth.



Thus the ego aggregates around himself matter of the lower mental levels—the matter which will afterwards become his mind body. But this matter is not selected at random ; out of all the varied and inexhaustible store around him he attracts to himself just such a combination as is perfectly fitted to give expression to his latent mental qualities. In precisely the same way, when he makes the further descent to the astral world, the matter of that world which is by natural law attracted to him to serve as his vehicle is exactly that which will give expression to the desires which were his at the conclusion of his last astral life. In point of fact, he resumes his life in each world just where he left it last time.

His qualities are not as yet in any way in action ; they are simply the germs of qualities, and for the moment their only influence is to secure for themselves a possible field of manifestation by providing suitable matter for their expression in the various vehicles of the child. Whether they develop once more in this life into the same definite tendencies as in the last one, will depend largely upon the encouragement or otherwise given to them by the surroundings of the child during his early years. Any one of them, good or bad, may readily be stimulated into activity by encouragement, or, on the other hand, may be starved out for lack of that encouragement. If stimulated, it becomes a more powerful factor in the man's life this time than it was in his previous existence ; if starved out, it remains

merely as an unfructified germ, which presently atrophies and dies out, and does not make its appearance in the succeeding incarnation at all.

This, then, is the condition of the child when first he comes under his parents' care. He cannot be said to have as yet a definite mind-body or a definite astral body, but he has around and within him the matter out of which these are to be builded.

He possesses tendencies, of all sorts, some of them good and some of them evil, and it is in accordance with the development of these tendencies that this building will be regulated. And this development in turn depends almost entirely upon the influences brought to bear upon him from outside during the first few years of his existence. During these years the ego has as yet but little hold over his vehicles, and he looks to the parents to help him to obtain a firmer grasp, and to provide him with suitable conditions ; hence their responsibility.

### THE PLASTICITY OF CHILDHOOD.

It is impossible to exaggerate the plasticity of these unformed vehicles. We know that the physical body of a child, if only its training be begun at a sufficiently early age, may be modified to a considerable extent. An acrobat, for example, will take a boy of five or six years old, whose bones and muscles are not yet as hardened and firmly set as ours are, and will gradually accustom his limbs and body to take readily and with comfort all

sorts of positions which would be absolutely impossible for most of us now, even with any amount of training. Yet our own bodies at the same age differed in no essential respect from that boy's, and if they had been put through the same exercises they would have become as supple and elastic as his.

If the physical body of a child is thus plastic and readily impressible, his astral and mental vehicles are far more so. They thrill in response to every vibration which they encounter, and are eagerly receptive with regard to all influences, whether good or evil, which emanate from those around them. They resemble the physical body also in this other characteristic - that though in early youth they are so susceptible and so easily moulded, they soon set and stiffen and acquire definite habits which, when once firmly established, can be altered only with great difficulty.

When we realise this, we see at once the extreme importance of the surroundings in which a child passes his earliest years, and the heavy responsibility which rests upon every parent to see that the conditions of the child's development are as good as they can be made. The little creature is as clay in our hands to mould almost as we will; moment by moment the germs of good or evil quality brought over from the last birth are awakening into activity; moment by moment are being built up those vehicles which will condition the whole of his after-life; and it rests with us to awaken the

germ of good, to starve out the germ of evil. To a far larger extent than is ever realised by even the fondest parents, the child's future is under their control.

Think of all the friends whom you know so well, and try to imagine what splendid specimens of humanity they would be if all their good qualities were enormously intensified, and all the less estimable features absolutely weeded out of their characters.

*That* is the result which it is in your power to produce in your child, if you do your full duty by him; such a specimen of humanity you may make him if you will but take the trouble.

### THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTS.

But how? you will say: by precept? by education? Yes, truly, much may be done in that way when the time comes; but another and far greater power than that is in your hands—a power which you may begin to wield from the very moment of the child's birth, and even before that; and that is the power of the influence of your own life

To some extent this is recognised, for most civilized people are careful of their words and actions in the presence of a child, and it would be an unusually depraved parent who would allow his children to hear him use violent language, or to see him give way to a fit of passion; but what a man does not realise is that if he wishes to avoid doing the most serious harm to his little ones, he must learn to control not only his words

and deeds, but also his *thoughts*. It is true that you cannot immediately see the pernicious effect of your evil thought or desire upon the mind of your child, but none the less it is there, and it is more real and more terrible, more insidious and more far-reaching than the harm which is obvious to the physical eye.

If a parent allows himself to cherish feelings of anger or jealousy, of envy or avarice, of selfishness or pride, even though he may never give them outward expression, the waves of emotion which he thereby causes in his own desire-body are assuredly acting all the while upon the plastic astral body of his child, tuning its undulations to the same key, awakening into activity any germs of those sins that may have been brought over from his past life, and setting up in him also the same set of evil habits, which when they have once become definitely formed will be exceedingly difficult to correct. And this is exactly what is being done in the case of most of the children whom we see around us.

### THE AURA OF A CHILD.

As it presents itself to a clairvoyant, the subtle body of a child is often a most beautiful object—pure and bright in its colour, free, as yet, from the stains of sensuality and avarice, and from the dull cloud of ill-will and selfishness which so frequently darkens all the life of the adult. In it are to be seen lying latent all the germs and tendencies of which we have spoken—some

of them evil, some of them good ; and thus the possibilities of the child's future life lie plain before the eye of the watcher.

But how sad it is to see the change which almost invariably comes over that lovely child-aura as the years pass on—to note how persistently the evil tendencies are fostered and strengthened by his environment, and how entirely the good ones are neglected ! and so incarnation after incarnation is almost wasted, and a life which, with just a little more care and self-restraint on the part of the parents and teachers, might have borne rich fruit of spiritual development, comes practically to nothing, and at its close leaves scarce any harvest to be garnered into the ego of which it has been so one-sided an expression.

### CARELESSNESS OF PARENTS.

When one watches the criminal carelessness with which those who are responsible for the bringing-up of children allow them to be perpetually surrounded by all kinds of evil and worldly thoughts, one ceases to marvel at the extraordinary slowness of human evolution, and the almost imperceptible progress which is all that the ego has to show for life after life spent in the toil and struggle of this lower world. Yet with so little more trouble so vast an improvement might be introduced !

It needs no astral vision to see what a change would come over this weary old world if the majority, or even any large proportion of the next generation,

were subjected to the process suggested above—if all their evil qualities were steadily repressed and atrophied for lack of nourishment, while all the good in them was assiduously cultivated and developed to the fullest possible extent. One has only to think what they in turn would do for *their* children to realize that in two or three generations all the conditions of life would be different, and a true golden age would have begun. For the world at large that age may still be distant, but surely we who are members of the Theosophical Society ought to be doing our best to hasten its advent: and though the influence of our example may not extend far, it is at least within our power to see that our own children have for their development every advantage which we can give them.

The greatest care, then, ought to be taken as to the surroundings of children, and people who will persist in thinking coarse and unloving thoughts should at least learn that while they are doing so they are unfit to come near the young, lest they infect them with a contagion more virulent than fever.

Much care is needed, for example, in the selection of the nurses to whom children must sometime be committed; though it is surely obvious that the less they are left in the hands of servants the better. Nurses often develop the strongest affection for their charges, and treat them as though they were of their own flesh and blood; yet this is not invariably the case, and, even if it be, the servants are almost inevitably less educated

and less refined than their mistresses. A child who is left too much to their companionship is, therefore, constantly subjected to the impact of thought which is likely to be of less elevated order than even the average level of that of his parents. So that the mother who wishes her child to grow up into a refined and delicate-minded man should entrust him to the care of others as little as possible, and should, above all things, take good heed to her own thoughts while watching over him.

Her great and cardinal rule should be to allow herself to harbour no thought and no desire which she does not wish to see reproduced in her son. Nor is this merely negative conquest over herself sufficient, for, happily, all that has been said about the influence and power of thoughts is true of good thought just as much as of evil ones, and so the parents' duty has a positive as well as a negative side. Not only must they abstain most carefully from fostering, by unworthy or selfish thoughts of their own, any evil tendency which may exist in their child, but it is also their duty to cultivate in themselves strong, unselfish affection, in order that all these may react upon their charge, quicken whatever of good is already latent in him, and create a tendency towards any good quality which is as yet unrepresented in his character.

Nor need they have any fear that such effort on their part will fail in its effect, because they are unable to follow its action for lack of astral vision. To the



sight of a clairvoyant the whole transaction is obvious; he distinguishes the waves set up in the mind-body of the parent by the inception of the thought, sees it radiating forth, and notes the sympathetic undulations created by its impingement upon the mind-body of the child: and if he renews his observations at intervals during some considerable period he discerns the gradual but permanent change produced in that mind-body by the constant repetition of the same stimulus to progress. If the parents themselves possess astral sight, it will, no doubt, be of great assistance to them in showing exactly what are the capabilities of their child, and in what directions he most needs development; but if they have not yet that advantage, there need not, therefore, be the slightest doubt or question about the result, for that must with mathematical certainty follow sustained effort, whether the process of its working be visible to them or not.

With whatever care the parents may surround the child, it cannot but be (if he lives in the world at all) that he will some day encounter influences which will stimulate the germs of evil in his composition. But it makes all the difference in the world which germs are stimulated *first*. Usually the evil is thoroughly awakened into activity before the ego has any hold upon the vehicles, and so when he does grasp them he finds that he has to combat a strong predisposition to various evils. When the germs of good are tardily aroused they have to struggle to assert themselves

against a set of inharmonious thought-waves which are already firmly established ; and often they do not succeed. If, however, by exceeding care before birth and for several years after it the parents are fortunate enough to be able to excite only the good undulations, as the ego gains control he finds it naturally easy to express himself along those lines, and a decided habit is set up in that direction. Then when the evil excitation comes, as come it surely will some time or other, it finds a strong momentum in the direction of good, which it strives in vain to overcome.

The command of the ego over his lower vehicles is often but small, unless he is unusually advanced ; but his will is always for good, because his desire in connexion with these vehicles is to evolve himself by their means, and such power as he is able to throw into the balance is therefore always on the right side. But with his at present somewhat uncertain grasp upon his astral and mental bodies, he is frequently unable to overcome a strong tendency in the direction of evil when that has been already established. If, however, he finds his strong tendency set up in the opposite direction, he is enabled thereby to get hold of his vehicles more effectually ; and after he has done that, the evil suggestion which comes later can only with difficulty succeed in obtaining an entrance. In the one case there is in the personality a taste for evil, a readiness to receive it and indulge in it ; in the other

there is a strong natural distaste for evil which makes the work of the ego much easier.

Not only should a parent watch his thoughts, but his moods also. A child is quick to notice and to resent injustice; and if he finds himself scolded at one time for an action which on another occasion caused only amusement, what wonder that his sense of the invariability of Nature's laws is outraged! Again, when trouble or sorrow comes upon the parent, as in this world it sometimes must, it is surely his duty to try, as far as possible, to prevent his load of grief from weighing upon his children as well as upon himself; at least when in their presence he should make a special effort to be cheerful and resigned lest the dull, leaden hue of depression should extend itself from his astral body to theirs.

Many a well-meaning parent has an anxious and fussy nature—is always fidgeting about trifles, and worrying his children and himself about matters which are really quite unimportant. If he could but observe clairvoyantly the utter unrest and disquiet which he thus produces in his own higher bodies, and could further see how these disturbed waves introduce quite unnecessary agitation and irritation into the susceptible vehicles of his children, he would no longer be surprised at their occasional outbursts of petulance or nervous excitability, and would realise that in such a case he is often far more to blame than they. What he should

contemplate and set before him as his object, is a restful, unruffled spirit—the peace which passeth all understanding—the perfect calm which comes from the confidence that all will at last be well.

Above all things must we strive to become an embodiment of the Divine Love, so that he may fully realise it in his own life, in order that he may flood with it the life of his child. The boy must live in an atmosphere of love; he ought never to meet with a jarring vibration, never even to know in his young days that there is anything but love in the world. And when the time comes, as come it unhappily must, when he learns that in the outside world love is often sadly lacking—all the more let him feel that his home will never fail him, that there at least he may always count upon the uttermost love, the fullest comprehension.

It is obvious that the training of the parents' character which is necessitated by these considerations is in every respect a splendid one, and that in thus helping on the evolution of their children they also benefit themselves to an extent which is absolutely incalculable, for the thoughts which at first have been summoned by conscious effort for the sake of the child will soon become natural and habitual, and will, in time, form the background of the parents' entire life.

It must not be supposed that these precautions may be relaxed as the child grows older, for though this extraordinary sensitiveness to the influence of

his surroundings commences as soon as the ego descends upon the embryo long before birth takes place, it continues, in most cases, up to about the period of maturity. If such influences as are above suggested have been brought to bear upon him during infancy and childhood, the boy of twelve or fourteen will be far better equipped for the efforts which lie before him than his less fortunate companions, with whom no special trouble has been taken. But he is still far more impressionable than an adult; he still needs to be surrounded by the same boundless sea of never-failing love; the same strong help and guidance upon the mental level must still be continued in order that the good habits both of thought and of action may not yield before the newer temptations which are likely to assail him.

Although in his earlier years it was naturally chiefly to his parents that he had to look for such assistance, all that has been said of their duties applies equally to anyone who comes into contact with children in any capacity, and most especially to those who undertake the tremendous responsibilities of the teacher. This influence of a master for good or for evil over his pupils is one that cannot readily be measured, and (exactly as before) it depends not only upon what he says or what he does, but even more upon what he thinks. Many a master repeatedly reproves in his boys the exhibition of tendencies for the creation of which he is himself directly responsible; if his

thought is selfish or impure, then he will find selfishness and impurity reflected all around him, nor does the evil caused by such a thought end with those whom it immediately affects.

The young minds upon which it is reflected take it up and magnify and strengthen it, and thus it reacts upon others in turn and becomes an unholy tradition handed down from one generation of boys to another, and so stamps its peculiar character upon a particular school or a particular class. Happily, a good tradition may be set up almost as easily as a bad one—not quite as easily, because there are always undesirable external influences to be taken into account; but still a teacher who realises his responsibilities and manages his school upon the principles that have been suggested will soon find that his self-control and self-devotion have not been fruitless.

### THE NECESSITY FOR LOVE.

There is only one way in which either parent or teacher can really obtain effective influence over a child and draw out all the best that is in him—and that is by enfolding him in the pure fire of a warm, constant, personal love, and thereby winning his love and confidence in return. More than any other qualification is this insisted upon in Alcyone's wonderful book "Education as Service"—a book which every parent and teacher should read, for the sake of the sweet spirit which it breathes, and the valuable hints which it contains.

It is true that obedience may be extorted and discipline preserved by inspiring fear, but rules enforced by such a method are kept only so long as he who imposes them ( or someone representing him ) is present, and are invariably broken when there is no fear of detection ; the child keeps them because he must, and not because he wishes to do so ; and meantime the effect upon his character is of the most disastrous description.

If, on the other hand, his affection has been invoked, his will at once ranges itself on the side of the rule ; he wishes to keep it, because he knows that in breaking it he would cause sorrow to one whom he loves ; and if only this feeling be strong enough, it will enable him to rise superior to all temptation, and the rule will be binding no matter who may be present or absent. Thus the object is attained not only much more thoroughly, but also much more easily and pleasantly both for pupil and teacher, and all the best side of the child's nature is called into activity, instead of all the worst. Instead of rousing the child's will into sullen and persistent opposition, the teacher arrays it on his own side in the contest against distractions or temptations ; the danger of deceit and secretiveness is avoided, and thus results are achieved which could never be approached on the other system.

It is of the utmost importance always to try to understand the child, and to make him feel certain that

he has one's friendliness and sympathy. All appearance of harshness must be carefully avoided, and the reason of all instructions given to him should always be fully explained. It must indeed be made clear to him that sometimes sudden emergencies arise in which the older person has no time to explain his instructions, and he should understand that in such a case he should obey, even though he may not fully comprehend ; but even then the explanation should always be given afterwards.

Unwise parents or teachers often make the mistake of habitually exacting obedience without understanding—a most unreasonable demand ; indeed, they expect from the child at all times and under all conditions an angelic patience and saintliness which they are far, indeed, from possessing themselves. They have not yet realised that harshness towards a child is always not only wicked, but absolutely unreasonable and foolish as well, since it can never be the most effective way of obtaining from him what is desired.

A child's faults are often the direct results of the unnatural way in which he is treated. Sensitive and nervous to a degree, he constantly finds himself misunderstood and scolded or ill-treated for offences whose turpitude he does not in the least comprehend ; is it wonderful that, when the whole atmosphere about him reeks with the deceit and falsehood of his elders, his fears should sometimes drive him into untruthfulness also ? In such a case the karma of the sin will fall most



heavily upon those who by their criminal harshness have placed a weak and undeveloped being in a position where it was almost impossible for him to avoid it.

If we expect truth from our children, we must first of all practise it ourselves; we must think truth as well as speak truth and act truth, before we can hope to be strong enough to save them from the sea of falsehood and deceit which surrounds us on every side. But if we treat them as reasonable beings—if we explain fully and patiently what we want from them, and show them that they have nothing to fear from us, because “ perfect love casteth out fear ”—then we shall find no difficulty about truthfulness.

A curious but not uncommon delusion—a relic, perhaps, of the terrible days when, for its sins, this unhappy country of England groaned under the ghastly tyranny of puritanism—is that children can never be good unless they are unhappy, that they must be thwarted at every turn, and never by any chance allowed to have their own way in anything, because when they are enjoying themselves they must necessarily be in a condition of desperate wickedness! Absurd and atrocious as this doctrine is, various modifications of it are still widely prevalent, and it is responsible for a vast amount of cruelty and unnecessary misery wantonly inflicted upon little creatures whose only crime is that they are natural and happy. Undoubtedly Nature intends that childhood shall be a happy time, and we

ought to spare no efforts to make it so, for in that respect as in all others, if we thwart Nature we do so at our peril. A hymn tells us:

God would have us happy, happy all the day.

and in this case as in all others it is our duty and our privilege to be fellow-workers together with Him.

It will help us much in our dealings with children if we remember that they also are egos, that their small and feeble physical bodies are but the accident of the moment, and that in reality we are about the same age; so that we owe them respect as well as affection, and we must not expect to impose our will or individuality upon theirs. Our business in training them is to develop only that in their lower vehicles which will co-operate with the ego—which will make them better channels for the ego to work through. Long ago, in the golden age of the old Atlantean civilization the importance of the office of the teacher of children was so fully recognised that none was permitted to hold it except a trained clairvoyant, who could see all the latent qualities and capabilities of his charges, and could, therefore, work intelligently with each, so as to develop what was good in him and to amend what was evil.

In the distant future of the sixth root race that will be so once more; but that time is, as yet, far away, and we have to do our best under less favourable conditions. Yet unselfish affection is a wonderful quickener of the intuition, and those who really love their child-

ren will rarely be at a loss to comprehend their needs ; and keen and persistent observation will give them, though at the cost of much more trouble, some approach to the clearer insight of their Atlantean predecessors. At any rate, it is well worth the trying, for when once we realise our true responsibility in relation to children we shall assuredly think no labour too great which enables us to discharge it better. Love is not always wise, we know ; but at least it is wiser than carelessness, and parents and teachers who truly love will be thereby spurred on to gain wisdom for the sake of the children.

### RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

Many members of our Society, while feeling that their children need something to take the place filled in ordinary education by the religious training, have yet found it almost impossible so to put Theosophy before them as to make it in any way intelligible to them. Some have even permitted their children to go through the ordinary routine of bible lessons, saying that they did not know what else to do, and that though much of the teaching was obviously untrue it could be corrected afterwards. This course is entirely indefensible ; no child should ever waste his time in learning what he will have to unlearn afterwards. If the true inner meaning of Christianity can be taught to our children, that indeed is well, because that is pure Theosophy ; but unfortunately that is not the form which religious instruction takes in ordinary schools.

There is no real difficulty in putting the grand truths of Theosophy intelligibly before the minds of our children. It is useless to trouble them with rounds and races, with mulaprakriti and planetary chains ; but then, however interesting and valuable all this information may be, it is of little importance in the practical regulation of conduct, whereas the great ethical truths upon which the whole system rests can, happily, be made clear even to the childish understanding. What could be simpler in essence than the three great truths which are given to Sensa in "The Idyll of the White Lotus" ?

"The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

"The principle which gives life dwells in us and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard, nor seen, nor smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

"Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself—the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

"These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them."

We might express these more tersely by saying ; "Man is immortal ; God is good ; as we sow, so shall we reap" Surely none of our children can fail to grasp these simple ideas in their broad outline, though as

they grow older they may spend many a year in learning more and more of the immensity of their full meaning.

Teach them the grand old formula that "death is the gate of life"—not a terrible fate to be feared, but simply a stage of progress to be welcomed with interest. Teach them to live, not for themselves, but for others—to go through the world as friends and helpers, earnest in loving reverence and care for all living things. Teach them to delight in seeing and in causing happiness in others, in animals and birds as well as in human beings; teach them that to cause pain to any living thing is always a wicked action, and can never have aught of interest or amusement for any right-thinking or civilized man. A child's sympathies are so easily roused, and his delight in doing something is so great, that he responds at once to the idea that he should try to help, and should never harm, all the creatures around him. He should be taught to be observant, that he may see where help is needed, whether by man or by animal, and promptly to supply the want so far as lies in his power.

A child likes to be loved, and he likes to protect, and both these feelings may be utilized in training him to be a friend of all creatures. He will readily learn to admire flowers as they grow, and not wish to pluck them heedlessly, casting them aside a few minutes later to wither on the roadside; those which he plucks he will pick carefully, avoiding injury to the plant; he will preserve and tend them, and his way through wood and

field will never be traceable by fading blossoms and uprooted plants.

### PHYSICAL TRAINING.

The physical training of the child is a matter of the greatest importance, for a strong, pure, healthy body is necessary for the full expression of the developing soul within. Teach him from the first the exceeding importance of physical purity, so that he may regard his daily bath as just as much an integral part of his life as his daily food. See to it that his body is never befouled with such filthy abominations of modern savagery as meat, alcohol or tobacco ; see to it that he has always plenty of sunlight, of fresh air and of exercise.

A little observation will show us how horrible are the surroundings in a great town; and if these are evil in their influence on adults, they are ten times worse for the more sensitive children. The truth is that no children ought ever to be brought up in a town at all ; and those whose evil karma compels them to work in such places should at least try if possible to live a little way outside of them for the sake of their children. It is far better for the children to be brought up in the country, even though it be in comparative poverty, than that, in order to amass money for them, the parents should allow them to grow up amidst all the noxious influences of a large town. Where the urban life is unfortunately unavoidable they should at least be taken out of the city as often as possible, and kept out as long as possible

So shall your child grow up pure, healthy and happy; so shall you provide, for the soul entrusted to your care, a casket of which it need not be ashamed, a vehicle through which it shall receive only the highest and best that the physical world can give—which it can use as a fitting instrument for the noblest and the holiest work.

As the parent teaches the child, he will also be obliged to set the example in this as in other things, and so the child will thus again civilize his elders as well as improve himself. Birds and butterflies, cats and dogs, all will be his friends, and he will delight in their beauty instead of longing to chase or destroy them. Children thus trained will grow up into men and women who recognise their place in evolution and their work in the world, and each will serve as a fresh centre of humanising force, gradually changing the direction of human influence on all lower things.

If thus we train our children, if we are thus careful in our relations with them, we shall bear nobly our great responsibility, and in so doing we shall help on the grand work of evolution; we shall be doing our duty not only to our children, but to the human race—not only to these particular egos, but to the many millions yet to come.

(FROM "HIDDEN SIDE OF THINGS.")

**CHAPTER II.**

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**CHILD—TRAINING***By C. W. Leadbeater.*

The following was the question which drew forth the reply and address here given :—

“On Sunday morning you referred to the importance of a kinder system of dealing with children, and mentioned approvingly the Froebel and Montessori systems. Some of us who are parents try to follow this plan, but there is often wilfulness and apparent depravity, and gentleness seems to fail.”

“Is it wise to permit a really wayward child to have its own way ? How can that be prevented but by fear of punishment ? One parent, for instance, has a boy of nine who persistently steals money, and seems incurable by gentle means.”

Well, yes ; but then what were you doing to allow that wilfulness and depravity to arise ? Please remember that you have had the whole thing in your hands, and that you have only yourselves to thank for any condition that arises. I suppose it cannot be too frequently repeated. Do you not see that a child comes over to you with his aura—his astral body, his mental body—practically blank ? He has a number of possibilities there ; he has the matter which would produce an astral body exactly similar to that which he had at



the end of his last astral life. He will probably have been an ordinary sort of person—not by any means a saint—perhaps, however, he is, and woe betide you if you do not recognise it in time. If he is an ordinary sort of person, he will have the usual sort of mixed karma which we all know so well, some good and some evil qualities.

Over and over again I would insist upon it that it is of the utmost importance which set of those qualities you would develop first ; but they are going to develop by impacts from without. Do you not see that the ego which stands behind can register in himself only those things which are good ? This is the salvation of the whole scheme, because we cannot store up in ourselves anything but good, owing to the makeup of the ego which cannot respond to the lower and coarser vibrations. If you have an evil quality prominent, you simply find a hole—nothing more. The ego has not developed the apposite good quality yet ; therefore the personality is able to rampage about which it could not do if the ego were fully developed. It is so all the way through. Therefore, the impulse towards anything evil does not come from within ; that, you know, is a particular abomination born of that disastrous Christian doctrine of original sin. The evil does not come from within the man, it does not come from the man himself ; he is a divine spark, and he will always be good and true and noble, but he cannot always get his personality to respond.

Well, now, those dormant qualities in your child, which that matter is there to express, will probably be awakened; most people take exceedingly good care to develop the evil ones first; then, if that is done, you get such a momentum on the side of evil that the good ones have to fight hard for any foothold at all, and you find the very greatest difficulty in developing the good. One of the commonest things is irritability; because the grown up people round a little child have been irritable, peevish and angry, the dormant qualities of peevishness and anger in the child have been awakened. The good qualities which might counteract them are there, but dormant.

Constantly people leave their children in the care of servants; now, of course, I know perfectly well that the servant is often utterly devoted—even unwisely so sometimes, if one can be unwisely devoted. I do not know how it is in this country, but I know that in Europe among our people are what we call a lower class, which means that they are on the whole less cultured, that they are less likely to have the finest feelings, more likely to have a certain amount of coarseness; on the whole, that is more likely than not. The mother who leaves her child in the care of a person at a lower stage than herself is distinctly putting him back into that class. He develops the qualities of that class which he left, say twenty or thirty thousand years ago. Then the mother expects him to show the keen sense of

honor, which belongs to the higher class, which he would have done had she given him half a chance.

Then the parents themselves are not half careful enough; they often squabble themselves in front of the child. I am not thinking so much of the child old enough to understand, but of a little tiny child; even the unborn child is affected by such things. Very disastrous is the effect you will produce on his vehicles, whether you wish it or not. If your astral body is all swirling in a state of excitement, then all that impresses itself on the astral body of the child; for it has no control over its vehicles.

If you keep the child during the first few years of his life away from anything like anger or harshness, anything that might produce fear or nervousness of any sort, then you could develop in him the affection side, you could develop courage and devotion—all the good qualities might be set going first. Sooner or later he will get some impact outside of yourself altogether which will tend to awaken the evil, but this would find a great difficulty in getting in—the whole astral body is up in arms against the attempted intrusion. You collect all the forces of nature on your side but to use them you must understand them a little bit. Sometimes all the highest and most beautiful of the qualities are just precisely the qualities that are crushed out.

We have all come through the savage stage; we had them to develop such virtues as are virtues for the

savage—courage, bravery under all sorts of difficulties, perseverance, endurance, all such things as those. All that forms part of the foundation of human character ; it is all there and we consider ourselves more highly civilized. But the savage had a great deal that to us now would be utterly repulsive—a vast amount of cruelty, a great deal of savage boastfulness. When men even of our own day get into positions of great difficulty or danger, it is not an uncommon thing for some old savage instincts to come out ; they are not so far below the surface. Some of us have developed chivalry and honor, but many people on occasion drop back to the original savage.

We have superimposed (we who are in the fifth sub-race) upon these savage characteristics a great deal of high and refined chivalry and honor. “ The grand old name of gentleman,” as the poet calls it, is the finest that you can give to anyone ; the qualities which it implies are glorious and noble qualities, but remember that all these are the delicate shades, as it were, which are imposed on the rough hewing. They are the work that the master sculptor does on the statue after the younger people have done the rough hewing. The finer touch comes from the master hand. It is just precisely the glory and the grace and the beauty of those masterly touches which get knocked off when you get a set of early Christians handling them—go, for example, to Italy and you will see.

The moment you handle a child roughly and brutally all that goes. You do not get rid of the original savage, you get rid of the surface. Boys make a community of their own, with laws of their own ; ideas quite foreign to those of the grown up people, and you will find that wherever their code of morals differs from yours it has gone back to the savage condition, because of the way in which you have treated them or allowed them to be treated ; you have knocked off the beauty and the delicacy and have left the savage strata. In later life more or less they get it back, but more often they do not.

All that goes to make a man of honor or the poet, all that is knocked away. To see the astral body with the possibility of all these beautiful efflorescences, in all sorts of different directions, arouses sad reflections. See that child once harshly or brutally treated, and look at him the next day or the next week or the next year—it is all the same—all that beautiful efflorescence is gone. There are cases where it is strong enough to survive. The first time you ill-treat a child you usually quite definitely remove from him for that incarnation, all the higher possibilities. If the law of love had obtained for the last two or three generations, we should approach Utopia. Think what it would be if all the undesirable qualities of your friends should happen to have disappeared, and all their good qualities were very much intensified—that is the sort of world you would have in one generation.

You ask how you are to deal with the child when the harm is done. I can only say that you can do nothing but intensify evil by adopting evil and wrong methods yourself. If through carelessness you have allowed everything to go wrong, that is your karma, and you must suffer whatever difficulty and trouble arises, bear it as well as you can, and try to re-establish the relations which you ought to have had from the first, always remembering that the child trusted himself to you and that you were not worthy of the trust.

At the same time, there is a great deal of talking about "wilfulness," you know, because you expect from the child very much more than you are prepared to give yourself. I do not know whether it ever occurred to you that you expect from your child instant obedience, you expect from him a degree of saintliness which you are very far from possessing yourself. Why? Well, you say, "because I want it." Conflict of feelings, you see. You have to make all this into an ordinary business matter of give and take. If you want to get the best out of your child, you must treat him as a reasonable being and you must be prepared to sacrifice your lordly way to his. Suppose you have to deal with someone in business, then you try to make yourself as reasonable as possible. You ought to be able to get, what is necessary, done on the principle of making your child think he wants to do it; it is not difficult in the case of infants.

If you get all these evils, it is because you have allowed them to grow, and you must make the best of

your own karma. You have started these things, now you are reaping the results; you need not have had them.

The question is asked, "Is it wise to permit a really wayward child to have its own way"? How can that be prevented but by fear of punishment?

Most things can be prevented by fear, but that fear is much worse than anything you are trying to prevent, because if you impress fear upon the astral body to that extent, you have done infinitely more harm to that character than could possibly come by any waywardness. You have wounded the highest expression of that personality. You have made it thenceforward and for ever, for that incarnation, an imperfect expression for its ego, because you have stamped it with that fear which is the opposite of love. Remember, the Apostle tells us "Perfect love casteth out fear." Fear also casts out love and that is a very serious thing.

I should say myself there are always ways and means. The whole theory of what you call punishment is utterly ridiculous. So-called punishment is utterly futile. If you make the child who steals give back what he had stolen, there would be some sense in it. If a child does not know a certain lesson, quite obviously he should learn it.

Every human being has a right to liberty, so long as it does not interfere with the right of others. The only rational system of punishment I ever heard of was that of the ancient Peruvians, who had built up a civilization in the midst of a number of less advanced peoples. They had

one punishment, and one only, and that was exclusion from the community. They said, in effect. "If you will not keep the rules, out you go"; and they turned the offender out to do what he chose among the less advanced tribes. It had the merit of simplicity, and worked remarkably well. The man under certain conditions could come back again if he were able to satisfy the judges concerned that he had lived an impeccable life; he was then admitted once more into the community. You could not work that under modern conditions; but it was a very rational scheme for those times, and it worked admirably.

It may not be wise to let a wayward child have its way, because it might interfere with the good of the community. It would be necessary to prevent that, but not by fear of punishment, which is infinitely worse for the child than the crime of burning down the house. Nobody ever seems to consider the child; they only seem to consider their own comfort. Your business is to keep the law of love; if in doing so you have to suffer certain inconvenience, then you must suffer it. As you say, it may not be good for the child to have always his own way.

You must yourself take the responsibility of the thing, and you must devote time and trouble to it in a rational way. When you are embarking on the teaching or the training of a child, the very first step is to win over the child himself.

(From "Theosophy in Australia.")



**CHAPTER III**

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**ON CHILD EDUCATION.**

*By E. H. C. Pagan, M. A.*

The problem of the true educator is, to discover how best to stimulate the latent good, and how best to eliminate the evil tendencies in every child that comes under his or her care, mentally, morally and physically. I say "her" advisedly, because we have to begin at the very earliest stage, and that inevitably concerns the mother.

Writers such as Dr. Rudolf Steiner, lay down certain principles as to the successive stages of a child's development; and without taking his divisions of time too rigidly, we can regard them as a very fair guide to the order in which the various powers unfold in every individual. He says that the different departments of nature, or as he expresses it in theosophical language, the different "vehicles of consciousness," come to maturity one after another in an ordered sequence.

Thus, the moment of physical birth marks when the physical organism becomes free and independent. It is now, or ought to be, capable of carrying out the processes of nutrition and respiration, for instance, with its own completed organs. During the antenatal period, when this organism or physical vehicle is being built up, certain conditions are necessary for its healthy development.

If these conditions are lacking, there will be congenital defects which nothing can afterwards supply. When the right time for a particular kind of development is past without the appropriate stage being satisfactorily completed, the whole nature must be the poorer throughout the present incarnation. The ante-natal period may be compared to the mineral department of our nature, as it is at the mineral level of consciousness. And as the characteristic virtue of a mineral is purity of substance, so the health of the organism at this stage seems to depend on its being guarded from all impurity, and supplied with those substances that suit its growth.

On the completion of this stage at birth, a new process begins, which theosophists describe as the freeing or individualising of the "Etheric body." By this they mean very much the same as is generally called the power of co-ordination. The first efforts of an infant seem to be aimed at gaining control over its own movements. The process of guiding its own little fist to its own mouth is one of great complexity and difficulty, which may take hours, days, weeks, or months to accomplish with ease and certainty. These efforts remind us of the slow movements of plants; and so we may compare this stage to the level of consciousness found in the vegetable kingdom. And as the characteristic virtue of the plant life is healthy growth, and its sin, disease or arrested development, so it is on the growth of healthy organs that the chief stress should be laid in those early years up till the cutting of the second teeth.

The process of acquiring control of movement is apparent in the handling of toys, the creeping and walking exercises, and should be carried on in carefully regulated games and gymnastics, and especially in such systems as Eurythmics and other forms of Greek Dancing, which have as their aim the perfecting of co-ordination and the encouragement of health and of gracefulness that inevitably follow upon such training.

The struggle for individuality in these matters which is meanwhile going on in the child's consciousness is marked by a strong aversion to receiving any unnecessary help. We all know the phrase, "I can do it myself!" And long before these words can be pronounced, the child is making their import clear by every kind of expressive gesture. Nothing gives greater offence at this stage than well-meant offers of help from grown-up people who do not understand that the greatest delight imaginable is the exercise of a newly developed faculty. This is often the clue to an unexpected passion of tears from an intelligent and amiable child. She has probably been looking forward eagerly to carrying out some advanced form of activity, and at the crucial moment, she sees it suddenly taken out of her hands.

It may only have been to open a door, or button her shoe, or help herself to sugar; but the charm lies in the sense of enlarged power, increased independence. It seems as if this were just a type of what happens on the development of each faculty in turn; and although it

is not always possible, or safe, to gratify the budding ambition, a good deal of friction can be avoided by an understanding of the situation. For instance, it is often for lack of time that a grown up person has to step in and finish what would be an inconveniently lengthy process ; and if some other play can be provided which will give the child the same kind of exercise, the difficulty and disappointment are easily overcome.

And the avoidance of friction is of the very greatest importance for the next stage in the child's development, which is no other than the individualising of the emotional nature. For, just as before the birth of the physical body, the child's life was dependent on the mother's, so before the emotional vehicle is fully developed the child shares the feelings of the mother ; and, indeed, is very sensitive to the moods of all around him. It is then of the utmost importance to have the child surrounded with the best feelings ; that is to say with love and sympathy.

Nothing distorts and impedes the development of the emotional nature so much as being exposed to unkindness and the want of sympathy. The worst people to be with a child at this stage are those who continually laugh at their mistakes and tease and embarrass them just for fun, or who take no trouble to understand the child's point of view, and snub and repress all their early efforts at self-expression. A frequent mistake made by an unthinking but affectionate parent, is to treat the child as if it had no individuality of its own ; mental, moral or physical. When this occurs at the

time when the emotions are becoming individualised, the child fiercely resents being asked, for instance, to kiss any one to whom the parents wish her to show affection ; or even being treated by her own parents as a plaything, to be caressed when they happen to be in a demonstrative mood. This, I must say, has most frequently occurred on the part of a father towards a little daughter whom he insists on treating as if she were a kitten or a puppy-dog ; her feelings as a human being with rights of control over her own expression of emotion are outraged.

I have known more than one instance of a child being sent to boarding school to avoid the unfriendly feeling that was growing up towards an over demonstrative father. It is as the child's emotional vehicle becomes freed from its "astral envelope," and contacts the feelings of others independently, that any kind of coercion in the matter is intolerable, and harmful.

Mr. F. T. Brooks associates the emotional nature with the animal kingdom ; because animals have in addition to the health and growth of the vegetable world, this extra faculty of feeling. They have likes and dislikes ; they can love and hate. Their characteristic virtues are love and compassion ; their sin is cruelty.

And so with the child as he emerges from the vegetable to the animal stage of his development, let us see that the characteristic virtue is fostered and not the characteristic vice of this awakening power. Let kindness and unselfishness be the ideals put before him so

that he will build these into his character and show them forth in his dealings with his fellows as life goes on.

It is quite astonishing to find how often this principle is violated even by the thoughtfulness of parents and guardians. How often, for instance, when a child knocks himself against a table or a chair, a mother or a nurse, anxious primarily to avert a cry, teaches the child to punish the innocent furniture, and so directly inculcates the ugly feelings of revenge, spite and vindictiveness. In school-life too, we see examples of wrong motive being urged upon a child by the odious system of marks and other outward results that are imposed on Government schools, and copied in many others, both public and private.

All true educationalists deplore the harmfulness of this system and try to minimise and counteract its bad effects as far as possible ; but parents do not often help in this matter ; for some of them are eager for their children to obtain outward distinctions, and are sometimes guilty of inciting them to work in order to beat some other child. This is a direct stimulus to motives of self-interest and unbrotherliness which we lament in the political and commercial life of our country.

Educationalists are gradually waking up to the importance of putting worthy motives before our future citizens, so that a juster and happier civilization may take the place of all that is unkind in our present social system.

Dr. Steiner connects the completion of the emotional vehicle, or "astral body ;" as theosophists call it, with the maturity of the physical organism. Whether this is so or not, we may be sure he is right in saying that the way in which children develop before the mental faculty is even beginning to individualise, is mainly by imitation. They love to imitate whatever they see and hear grown-up people doing or saying. Woe betide the parent or guardian who behaves in a child's presence in a manner he would not wish the child to copy.

One of the most irritating and distressing things an irresponsible friend or acquaintance can do, is deliberately to teach a little child ugly words and ugly gestures. It is often the bachelor uncle, or elder brother, who finds amusement in hearing a baby lisp out profane or vulgar speeches, which, of course, the baby does not understand. Such people imagine they are doing no harm, since the baby knows nothing of the undesirable associations the words call up to those who hear them. But if they could see or feel the telepathic influence that is communicated to an impressionable child from the thoughts and feelings of those around him, he would see that an avenue was being opened by which all that is degrading connected with the unlovely words and gestures, will sooner or later reach the child's consciousness. If it is doing nothing else it is at least using the wonderful faculty a child possesses for memorising everything easily, to store the mind with what

is unprofitable and unlovely when it might just as easily be employed to amass associations of beauty and delight. By the time a child comes to school, it is easy for a teacher to discover what sort of mental impressions have been registered on the sensitive medium of the young brain.

If it is already crowded with images of unworthy motives and undignified behaviour, so that a taste for low comedy has been cultivated, it is extremely difficult for the school teacher to wipe out these impressions and put a dignified or reverent view of life in their place. The more one believes that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom" the more one is grieved to find that a false start has been made. For without a foundation of reverence and humility, which should be well and truly laid while the emotional nature is forming, nothing can be learned that is worth knowing.

Be it noted, at the same time, that if children are not allowed innocent fun, or other healthy exercise of the imagination, they are apt to seek undesirable forms of excitement in surreptitious ways, to the lasting detriment of the emotional side of their nature.

After this period, during which the emotions are becoming individualised, chiefly through the exercise of the imagination and the imitative faculties, the next stage begins when the child wants to understand everything. The favourite request is no longer, "Tell me a story?" but, "Why?" and "What for?" Reason is



coming into play and wants exercise in every conceivable direction. And just as it was well earlier to supply stories of fairies, and heroes, and angles to stimulate the development of wonder, admiration and love ; or of giants, and tyrants, and monsters, to "purge the emotions," as Aristotle would say, "by arousing feelings of pity and terror," so when the faculty of reason is developing, a child should be given scope for reasoning about scientific relationships, cause and effect, observations and deductions.

Nature study is most valuable in showing order and system in actual phenomena, and mathematics, logic, and languages show the same in the processes of thought.

During this period a child should, if possible, be with people who can think clearly and answer his questions in all truth and humility ; not hesitating to confess ignorance on occasion ; for it is good that a child should realise that there are some things that even "a grown-up" does not know. Their sense of reverence is enhanced by learning that Absolute Truth is too great for any human mind to hold ; and their interest is quickened on hearing that there are still many things to be discovered in life and in nature. It is, for instance, when religion is represented as a cut and dried theology, completed once for all, that it sounds dull and unattractive to the growing intelligence. If it is shown, instead, to be the field in which most research has still to be made, and the most far-reaching results still to be

attained, it takes its true place as the most deeply interesting of all possible studies.

The worst kind of person for a child to be with at this stage is the muddle-headed person who cannot speak the truth, either from lack of will or lack of training. Another danger comes from the interfering person, who often with the best intentions, insists on doing the child's thinking and planning for him, with the result that the child is discouraged from forming any projects and interrupted in the carrying out of any plan. Thus, the valuable qualities of initiative and application and concentration are nipped in the bud, arrested at the only time granted for their development.

I have known parents who never allowed their child to decide which brick to put above another on the nursery floor, or what game to play, or book to read in their school days, lament sadly that the boy should later show no decided bent and be too ready to take up one thing after another, only to drop each in turn.

Another kind of harmful influence at this stage comes from the kind of person who amuses himself by telling untruths to see what a child will do. There is no harm in talking deliberate nonsense to a child so long as it is recognised to be nonsense ; on the contrary, those people with a gift for make belief do invaluable work in stimulating the faculty of imagination, which is one of the most precious gifts of the mind. For, imaginative thinking, if well directed, leads to creative power in art,

and encourages originality and initiative as distinct from logical reasoning. Logical reasoning is the process by which one mind reaches the same conclusion as another; and so the two are able to work together along recognised lines.

But in imaginative thinking there are no foregone conclusions, no binding precedents; a wide field spreads out before the dreamer, and no two travellers in this realm take the same pathway. The dream world has laws of its own, guided by feeling and emotion; and the better these laws are understood the better will the result be in artistic achievement or scientific discovery.

The kind of nonsense that does harm is not fiction, but deliberate deception, carried on in a spirit of irresponsible mischief or heartless experiment. Such deception often brings bitter pain to the child when the fraud is discovered; and I have known the sense of injury to be cherished for long years against the person who practised it.

It is surely a cowardly subterfuge, when a child asks an embarrassing question, to answer with a lie. It is better to withhold the true answer, and give a true reason for doing so at that particular time.

The importance of truth at this stage can hardly be over-rated; for as Mr. F. T. Brooks puts it, "Truth is the health of the mind, and falsehood its disease." Thus, if the "mental body" has an atmosphere of truth to grow in, it forms healthily; whereas, if its pabulum is

falsehood and muddle, the power to think clearly can never develop.

By the time the mental body is completely individualised, we may consider that the incarnating ego has gathered round itself, as well as its circumstances or fate permit, the vehicles suitable for its manifestation on the physical, etheric, emotional and mental planes, passed through and got over. But in nearly all children, various primitive traits can be noticed such as animal greed, selfishness, vindictiveness, huffiness—and sometimes even untruthfulness and dishonesty.

All these phases pass ; the civilized child outgrows them, and on reaching maturity he bears no trace of them ; or rather he shows us then the developed stage of those very qualities which appeared as faults in early life, but were really virtues in the making.

It is the duty of the teacher to help the child through this revisal process, so as to hasten his arrival at the point to which his former experiences have led him.

There is, in the opinion of thoughtful people, no more important lesson to teach a child than that the purpose of his life is to learn ; and it is one that a very young child can grasp. By the time a child has been taught to answer the question, " Why are we sent into this world?" by the ready response " To learn," I venture to hope that he has been helped through all the planes, and is gradually coming more and more closely into relationship with the instrument that is being shaped for use on each.

Even here and now, the saints of this world are known by their spiritual radiance ; and those who are not yet saints are seen to be at very different stages of the journey to perfection. We can recognise among our fellow men the "baby-souls" who are mere beginners in this world's training and are still struggling with the earliest lessons, "Thou shalt not kill" and "Thou shalt not steal." They need all the help we can give them to make them understand the discipline of life, so that the lesson may be fully learned and the pain of it need not recur.

Just as the human embryo rapidly recapitulates the evolution of the whole species, so the civilized human being seems to recapitulate in childhood the stages through which previous lives have led him. The further the soul has progressed in previous lives, the more rapid are these stages ; he will not grow up to be a grumbler against fate, an envier of his neighbour, or a flippant seeker after pleasure. He will, instead, if he has thoroughly assimilated the idea, accept all his chances and mischances as the opportunities granted him for learning those lessons which his character most needs. He will never talk about a misfortune being all some one else's fault, if he has grasped the idea that he is reaping now what he has sown in a past life, or even in an early period of the present life. He will by degrees see that we could not learn anything with certainty unless we could rely absolutely on the law of cause and effect. Nothing, for instance, can teach a child to

speak the truth so well as finding that untruth has always evil results. Many life-times may be spent on acquiring this knowledge ; but the use of a teacher is to point out the law, so that fewer experiments are required before the lesson is taken to heart. One telling is not enough, and telling alone would be useless.

Thus, it is not till all the vehicles of consciousness have been fully developed and harmonised and brought under control of the spiritual man or higher self, that the faculty that transcends intellect can begin to act freely. It is when the desires of the body no longer absorb attention, or the passions hold sway, or mind wander aimlessly, that the practice of mental concentration and religious meditation will reveal a new heaven and a new earth ; there will be spiritual vision, poetic inspiration, intuitive understanding and mystic communion, in comparison with which all human knowledge will appear as vanity.

For, " Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail ; whether there be tongues, they shall cease ; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For, we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child ; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly ; but then face to face ; now I know in part ; but then I shall know even as also I am known.

E. H. C. PAGAN, M. A.

**CHAPTER IV.**

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**A TALK ABOUT EDUCATION**

*By Annie Besant.*

I want if I can to put before you certain great principles which grow from Theosophical ideas, and to apply these principles to practice as they touch Education. Let me say to you at the very outset, that every such application of a principle to a practice in the outer world is a matter that you must think out, and each for yourself. It is not because I am President of the Theosophical Society, it is not because I am a student of Occultism, that, therefore, you are to accept what I say on any of these matters. If such be not what you in your own judgment think right, then do not let any amount of knowledge that you may think I possess overbear your own intelligence, your own thought; because if you do you become echoes, where you ought to be thinkers. You become less useful to your country, for you deprive that country of the particular view of a thing that is seen from your own standpoint. Every one of us, being different from every one else, has a standpoint of his own. The view from that will depend upon the man's intellectual and moral value; but still it is his, and the thing that he sees from his own standpoint is a little different from that seen from the standpoint of anyone else in the world. Individual judgment may be wrong, but it gives a thought from a

point of view that you have and I have not, and the third man has another. If you only echo my views from my standpoint you are not adding anything to the knowledge of the world. Having eyes, use them ; and use the eyes of the mind as much as you would use the eyes of the body. I say that, because I know so many people say : “ Oh ! Mrs. Besant said it.” Perhaps she did; but that is not an argument; it is one opinion to be weighed among others, and the weight of the opinion depends upon the knowledge you have. In the real world heads are weighed, not only counted ; and the full head weighs more than the empty one ; a principle which I hope will some day be applied even in such things as the government of countries. So I will ask you to take what I say at its value. I am going to put before you what seem to me to be principles drawn from Theosophy in application to the schools of India. As you know, I have had a fairly long educational experience, partly in teaching those who find it difficult to reach definite principles of instruction. I only put that as experience, to be studied and weighed but not to dominate your thought.

The first great principle, it seems to me, that we must apply when we are dealing with our students is the principle of Reincarnation, which is utterly left out in all modern education. It ought not to be left out where Hindus, at least, have influence over schools. In the West the recognition of the principle of Heredi-



ty is to some extent colouring education. Men no longer think as Robert Owen thought, and came to grief by thinking in his Colony, that a child is a white page on which the teacher can write whatever he chooses. It is recognised that, by the law of heredity, the child comes into your hands as a page on which much has already been written in the past, and you have not to deal with the child as one of a thousand, to be made by a teacher, every one in the same shape. He is an individual from his birth, for he is a Jiva, a living Spirit, separated from others by encompassing veils. The form of the brain will condition the expression of the mind; the material of the brain will condition it. The scientist will tell you there are certain predispositions in the child, which you ought to take into account in his education. It may be a criminal brain; that should mark the child out for a special line of guardianship and education. Every child must have the experience of the Self within him, conditioned by the form of the instrument whereby that Self will be expressed in the outer world. The scientist admits that to a certain extent; we admit it to a practically unlimited extent, for you may have in the form of the child a Jiva very much more unfolded than your own. Your whole attitude is changed when you realise what reincarnation means as applied to the training of the young. You must watch the child, his emotions, his words, his actions, and out of these you must try to form a judgment concerning the tendencies in the child. You must try to check the

tendency towards evil and encourage the tendency towards good.

The next principle you must apply is the influence of thought and emotion; you must realise that you influence your child more by your thoughts and emotions than by your actions. That is now too much forgotten in the home life of the child. As you think, your child begins to think, for your stronger thought playing on the plastic brain shapes it to some extent by the thoughts that you impress upon it. And so you become responsible for part of your child's character, because the child is with you at the time when the body is most plastic, and when the instrument is being formed through which the man within the child will hereafter be compelled to express himself. What would you think of a musician who said: "Oh, it does not matter if I give my instrument a blow." The greatest musician is the one who is most careful as to the perfection of his instrument, and he will guard it with the most scrupulous care in order that his own music breathed through the instrument may reproduce the melody which he hears within himself. And so is it with the child; the body is the instrument, the child the player, to be conditioned by his instrument; and that largely depends upon the father and the mother, and the conditions of the home.

Take the child, next, when he passes from the education of the home to that of the school. But may I

urge on all of you who are parents that the education of the child in the home is the most vital part of all. You may make conditions for the growing shrub that will distort the growth of the tree into which that sapling develops, and if the child goes crooked to the school how shall the school education straighten the distorted stem ?

May I speak quite frankly to you, friends, because, as you know, I love the Indian people more than any other on earth ? Looking at the Indian father, in the best of them compared with the best of the English fathers that I know, I see practically no difference ; but in the average father in the two countries it seems to me that on the whole the balance is in the favour of the English father. It was not so four or five generations ago,—it has grown to be so gradually. We find the average English father gradually changing his attitude to his son as the son grows into the boy, and the boy into the young man. He becomes his son's friend rather than his ruler. In my fairly wide experience of the homes of my Indian friends, I have noticed a regrettable change coming over the relation between father and son about the time the boy goes to school. I have not shared in the South in the home life as I have shared in it in the North ; but I often noticed among my best friends there that both on the part of the father and the son there was a change about seven years of age, and I have been told that it grows out of a maxim : " During the first seven years of life

caress your son : from 7 to 16 discipline him ; from 16 treat him as a friend." Discipline too often means standing apart, and you will find it hard to get back to the position of a friend. I have noticed the boys grow rather shy of their elders about seven or eight. As little children they climbed over their father, rolled over him, and regarded him as their playmate ; and I have thought how beautiful was the life of the Indian home, and how utterly it was unknown among my own countrymen, only known through the missionaries who talk scandalous nonsense. But I have noticed a change, and have said : " Why is so-and-so growing so silent? He will not talk freely before his father." As he grows a little older he is shy and respectful. That should not be, for the boy's dangerous time comes when he is 14, 15, or 16 ; and if he is afraid of you, to whom is he going to turn when difficulties break upon him, and he neither understands himself nor the conditions in which he is living? I seem to see in the boys more timidity than they ought to show. They do not expect to be welcomed with sympathy and understanding in the school, and it seems to me that that must be partly the fault of the home, and partly the fault of the school atmosphere. These boys ought to feel that if they go utterly wrong, the father and the teacher are their best friends, the people to whom they should turn, not the people from whom they should try to escape. And I have noticed with Mr. Arundale, one of the best teachers I know, that when some of his lads went wrong, he

was the first man they ran to in order that he might help them. He never threw a boy back, repelled him, because the boy had done wrong ; on the contrary, he welcomed him with a genial smile and a softer face. The boy was encouraged to speak. Perhaps he had done something he was ashamed of ; he needed to be helped to speak. Feeling ashamed was a sign of promise ; but he was induced to speak openly. Mr. Arundale's boys loved him and trusted him, and went straight to him in their troubles ; and boy after boy has been rescued from evil and shame, and put on the right path again when he had stumbled on the wrong, because he trusted his teacher, and looked upon him as a helper and a friend. There lies the ideal alike for father and teacher.

You, fathers, are the most responsible. Oh ! let your boys feel that they can come to you when they have gone wrong. If they go to somebody else they may go worse and worse ; and that is one reason why I have felt so strongly about the missionaries, because they misrepresent Theosophy and so injure thousands of boys who otherwise might be helped into nobler lives. It is the father's place to help his son ; if the Indian father did this duty, there would not be so many pale and anæmic boys on the benches of our schools, who have gone wrong because no man has helped them or explained the boy to himself. It is the father's duty. If the father neglects it, the teacher must step in and help the boy to conquer himself, for the boy's instinct

is to self-conquest and not to self-degradation, and if an elder stretches out his hand to help, he is saved where otherwise he might fall.

Then apply the great principle of love. Love your boys; by perfect love cast out fear. In the Theosophical schools we must do away with punishments, and trust to influence to take their place. "Oh," said a school inspector who came one day to the Central Hindū College, "you cannot keep discipline without the cane." Mr. Arundale said: "I do preserve discipline, and I do without the cane." The use of the cane, particularly as applied to a child, is shameful; it is only the result of your own bad temper getting the upper hand, and you strike the helpless creature who has irritated you. What would you think of a giant who came along and caught you up and flogged you? What do you suppose the child thinks of you? You give him a slap; you teach him to be cruel. You are making in him a bad father for the children yet unborn. He will do the same to his children as you have done to him, and so the bad practice goes down the generations, and injures their homes, and makes them places of fear instead of love. We have been publishing lately a number of papers, "What the Central Hindū College has been to me." There has hardly been one of those papers out of which I have not had to cut the lines which said: "This was the first place I came to where I lost fear." Most of them complained about their homes. I was ashamed that people should read what the boys

had said about the atmosphere of the home and I put my pen through it; but I read it and grieved over it. Never a blow should be struck in anger; it injures the boy; it degrades the elder who strikes it.

I know that is not the view in England; but the English have a certain harshness of tyranny in them, the forcing of a person to give way to their will; and that has run, I am bound to say, into the treatment of the boys there. It is growing less and less, and flogging now is generally only inflicted by the head master himself for disgraceful offences. But people defend it, even the law defends it. That is because the law codifies the bad opinion of the past instead of the higher opinion of the present; but gradually one may hope that this right of the father and this wrong of the child will disappear from the homes both of England and of India. I am not putting the one against the other, the same failing is often in both—the use of strength against the feeble, which is the most cowardly thing that you can find anywhere. I know it is not realised in that way. The words of King Solomon are quoted: “Spare the rod and spoil the child.” It is all nonsense. A person is not fit to have a child, if he cannot manage it without beating it. Think of it as you would if you were outside the action, and you will see that an evil custom has blinded you. “Without the cane, no discipline!” And yet, without the cane, inspector after inspector has written in the book at Benares: “The discipline of the school is admirable.” What must you

replace the cane by? By Love that guides, not fear which merely frightens. If you keep a boy straight by fear, the moment you are out of the way he goes wrong; if you keep him straight by love, he will not go wrong when you are absent.

In another school, I know, in the old days the cane was used; but when a Theosophist went there he stopped it. "All punishment is to stop," he said, and he told the teachers: "You must not speak harshly to a boy." With what result? It became the best disciplined school in the locality; that is a practical proof of the application of the Theosophical principle. The boys are industrious, well-behaved, and well-mannered. All those qualities are important for each boy, important for his future. And so people begin to realise in looking at this application that you may manage a boy without terrifying him, and he will work better from love than from fear.

Why, it is the same with horses; if you beat a horse it will be timid and shy, whereas if you have never struck a blow in the training of your horse, he will obey your voice and trust you, and you can carry him through danger without danger to yourself.

I had once a very beautiful and high-spirited mare, and I never struck her a single blow. I managed her entirely with my hands and voice, using a bit which did not hurt her mouth—though she did run away with me once or twice at first. I was riding her one day



over, a railway crossing. They had let me pass through one gate, and the gate on the other side was not open; just then a train was coming. The creature was terrified and stopped dead. Did I strike her? No. "Go on, Girlie," I said; and she went forward. The terror gave way before the voice she loved, and saved my life and her own. The voice of the mistress that she loved was enough to get rid of the paralysis of fear.

How much more with a boy, the boy that loves you! you can do anything with him; and the Indian boys are the most manageable boys that I know. Anything can be done, if you will treat them reasonably and kindly. We carried the Central Hindū College through the terrible time of the unrest, when assassinations were going on. We never had any real trouble; a reflection of trouble, yes; but when that happened I always went myself and talked to the boys. An order came one day that no boy was to be allowed to go to a lecture by Lala Lajpat Rai. Now he is a great man and a good speaker. I went to the Commissioner and said: "Will you let me take the boys? I will go with them." "No," he said, "I cannot allow it." I said: "You are the representative of the King, and you say it is dangerous to the public peace. Well, you are responsible, not I; I will keep them at home." I called them together in the school hall and told them that, though I sympathised with them, we were bound to obey, as good citizens; and I told them that if they wanted to dispute a definite order, they must do so

away from the College. I pointed out to them how their future might be marred by a boyish act of defiance, how they might be sorry if, in a rash act of enthusiasm of boyhood, they had done a thing that would have caused their expulsion by the authorities. I placed the honour of the College in their hands, and they guarded it as their own. We got on so well, that in some cases where boys had got into trouble, where one had been tried in the great trial in Calcutta—we were allowed to take them into the College and train them by love, so that they have gone out as useful citizens, where otherwise their young lives might have been ended in the prison or on the scaffold.

Theosophy should teach us to understand things from the boy's standpoint. He hears or reads something in a newspaper that fires him, and perhaps in his copy-book he writes a silly verse. It does not mean anything serious. He is but a child. Teach him better, but do not treat him as though he were a man. It is that exaggeration that has made so much difficulty. Boys have been treated as men and not as children. They say treasonable things in Oxford and Cambridge, Harrow and Eton, and everybody laughs at them. Do not put into the boy's words the meaning of the man, and judge him as though he were a man. In a very sad experience I came across a boy of 16, who committed an act of discourtesy, of bad manners, therefore, to be gently explained as unworthy of a gentleman. He was expelled. The schools were closed against him,

He fell into the hands of those who led boys to commit acts they were afraid to do themselves. I blame those teachers who took the child's discourtesy and treated it as though it were a man's attempt to overthrow the Crown. In the Theosophical school, the boy will be treated with the greatest care and tenderness. You must get hold of the boy by affection when he is beginning to take interest in the questions of the day ; this should be largely the mother's work. But you have not educated your women to be able to guide your sons when the outer world is beginning to stimulate their emotions and their thoughts. No one is more tender than an Indian mother, more exquisitely gentle, more marvellously patient. I have seen many a saint among the wives and mothers of India, but I have hardly met one who is as wise as she ought to be, and would be, if she had had a chance. We do not find Gāṇḍhārīs to-day among the wives and mothers, and yet their influence is often the best to restrain the hot-headed boy. They love, but love is not enough ; wisdom is required as well for the training of the boy, as he comes into contact with the world. It is not enough to educate the boy ; you must educate the future mother, and you must educate her for the motherhood and wifedom which is the lot of the Indian girl. You must teach her the things that will make her a helpful companion. To be a mother is to have her hand on the destiny of the Nation, and as she trains her boys and girls so will be the India of the future.

Theosophy, then, as applied to education, means the principles of reincarnation, of love, of wisdom, of regard for the laws of nature touching child-marriage, of justice as regards education in England and in India. These will be the results of the spread of Theosophical principles amongst you; and their application to the education of India will hasten the building of the Indian Nation, and quicken the time when she shall take her place among the peoples of the earth.

ANNIE BESANT.



"The parents in Mr C. Jinarajadasa's future ideal state described in beautiful detail in his pretty little book "*Flowers and Gardens*," consider that a child coming to them brings with it two great privileges, one of contemplating a virtue represented by the child, and the other of blossoming in a virtue evoked by its presence among them. One child, they say, reflects innocence, another candour; a third is the embodiment of delight in life, and a fourth of the priceless gift of leadership. Humour is with them one of the virtues, but they consider nothing humorous unless while they smile they feel pity too; here and there they find a child that with its quaint and bright remarks makes them keenly see and feel life in a deeply humorous way, and they note and observe that child and its ways as we might study some budding genius. Their children, as the best of children will, have their moods; and then it is that the parents feel they must manifest those virtues they are called upon to grow. When a child is fractious, "we must grow in patience," is the thought the parents have; even when they fail to be patient, they never blame the child for the irritability they feel. If a child is disobedient, they say to themselves, 'How little we ourselves know of the privilege of obedience; since we have not learnt how to renounce our desires, of course, we can not work on the wills of others through their desires'. And so on, with every manifestation, pleasant and unpleasant, of the children's natures. In the good they see virtues reflected, in the bad they hear a call to shine out in virtue."—*Flowers and Gardens*.

**CHAPTER V.**

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**TRUE EDUCATION.**

*By C. W. Leadbeater.*

In the preparation that we have to make for the coming of the World-Teacher, no part is more important than the training of children. For the children of to-day will be men and women a few years hence; they will be just in the prime of their lives when He shall come. Probably all the strongest and most active of those who will stand round Him as His closest adherents, are at this very moment in the hands of parents, nurses and school-masters. See, then, of what moment for one who believes in His coming, is the treatment of the children of to-day !

Viewed in the light of the near approach of the Great Teacher, our present methods of education are seen to be lamentably inadequate. The subjects taught are clearly not what is necessary, and the methods of teaching are not only obsolescent, but, in most cases, reprehensible to the last degree.

The word education means drawing-out—the drawing out from the child the faculties and abilities which lie concealed within him. ' In our day, that meaning seems to have been entirely forgotten; the modern educator seeks not to draw out, but to pour in—to load the mind of the unfortunate pupil with a vast mass of unrelated and ill-digested facts, choosing, by preference,

such facts as have no possibility of being of any use to him. Such a theory is not only false, but mischievous.

True education must bear in mind that the child is not a mere empty shell; not the outer husk that we see before us, but the kernel which dwells within; not a body, but a soul; a spark of God's own fire, a veritable fragment of the divine; and that the duty of the educator is to help that latent divinity to unfold itself, to fan that spark into the sacred flame of divine love. This is no exaggerated, idealistic, or poetical conception: it is simply the statement of a plain fact, and those whom it concerns will do well to heed it.

Education is given not only at school, but in the home; not only by the pedagogue, but by the parent; not only by precept, but by example. It is achieved, not only by what is taught to the child, but by our attitude towards him; and most of the mistakes are made because that attitude is fundamentally wrong—because we are thinking not of him, but of ourselves.

No man is compelled to undertake the responsibility of parentage, nor need any man become a school-master; but if he voluntarily assumes those obligations, he is bound to fulfil them, and is seriously blameworthy if he fails to do so. In either case, he embarks upon a task the due accomplishment of which demands a life keyed to a high level of unselfishness—even of self-abnegation. Not every one is capable of this; indeed, at the present time, but very few, either of parents or

schoolmasters, achieve it. But this is largely because they have not realised the need of it—because they have inherited a callous and brutal tradition. They claim what they call “parental rights,” not realising that in this matter, as in so many others, man has no rights, but only duties. A soul has entrusted his body to their care; it is alike their duty and their privilege to be faithful to that trust, to do their best to make that tenement noble, useful, fit for his habitation.

How is this to be done? Only by constant attention, by unfailing kindness, by uttermost sympathy, and by a patience that nothing can weary. The child must float upon an ocean of love; he must never hear a harsh word, never see an inconsiderate action. The organisation of a child is one of the most marvellously delicate things in nature, and a moment's thoughtlessness, touch of acerbity, may create a breach in confidential relations, that will take years to heal. Harshness of any sort towards a child, upon any pretext whatever, is a crime which it is impossible to characterise too strongly, and the abominable cruelty which habitually marks the relations between some parents and schoolmasters and the unfortunate victims who have fallen into their clutches, is nothing but a relic of savagery, an inhuman horror which brands with indelible disgrace the country which is so uncivilised as to permit it. To inflict suffering intentionally upon any human being is the act of a devil, not of a man, and the fact that the in-

fictor pretends to think that his cruelty will cure some fault in the child in no way palliates its wickedness. If he knew anything of the real facts of life, he would be aware that the effect of his brutality is in every case far worse than that of the fault which he affects to imagine he is trying to correct.

What is needed is a relation in every way exactly the opposite from these nightmare horrors—gentle but vigilant protection on the one side, utter trustfulness on the other, and the greatest affection on both. Our first duty to the children is to keep them healthy and happy; for, without happiness, no true progress is possible for them.

To promote their physical health all the ordinary rules of hygiene must be followed; they must have plenty of nutritious food, plenty of sunlight, of fresh air and exercise, and plenty of sleep; they must be kept scrupulously clean; they must be clad always in loose and comfortable garments; they must avoid all unnatural and noxious habits, such as flesh-eating, alcohol-drinking, or tobacco smoking.

To secure their happiness should present no difficulties if the proper conditions of love and confidence have been established; for children are naturally happy when they are kindly treated, and it is easy to learn to follow and understand their varying moods. It is essential that, though their moods may vary, those of the parents or teachers should not; for a child is quick to



notice and to resent injustice, and if he finds himself chidden at one time for an action which, on another occasion, is only laughed at, the foundations of his universe are unsettled.

Parents and teachers little realise that the young mind of the child is, in many ways, like a mirror; it reflects quickly and faithfully the thoughts and feelings of those around it. Therefore, it would be criminal carelessness to allow oneself to be depressed or angry in the presence of a child; for depression and anger are infectious, and we have no more right to pass on mental than physical diseases to our neighbours. So sensitive are children to outer influences that we should be on our guard never to permit in ourselves any thought or feeling which we do not wish to see in them, for it is exceedingly likely to be reproduced by them. It is eminently necessary, in dealing with them, to preserve a restful and unruffled spirit—the peace which passeth understanding. Never be petulant with the child, even when his humour is boisterous; always try to meet his changing moods with full and kindly comprehension; love is a wonderful quickener of the intuition.

So much as to our behaviour towards the child—our method of helping him to draw out from himself the best that is in him; to express through his youthful body the soul that is imprisoned within. We prepare him by precept (but sparingly), and by a certain amount of direct instruction; but most of all by example. Our

first care is to avoid putting hindrances in the way of his development by any stupidities of our own; our second is to promote that development and offer opportunities for it by every means within our power. And the great key-note of our education and our attitude, the beginning, middle, and end of it, is love. Let the parent or teacher become himself an embodiment of the Divine Love, and fully realise it in his own life, so that he may flood with it the life of his child.

That should be the manner of our teaching; but what shall be its matter? There we are, unfortunately, much burdened and limited by the customs of an age which we have outgrown. Our universities prescribe a certain curriculum, founded upon the theories of centuries ago, and if we wish to obtain recognition from them we must, of course, follow their lead, even though it takes us into somewhat arid wastes. Their system of education belongs to a period when there were few books in the world, and so a man who wanted to know anything must store it in his head; it is a system absolutely unsuited to our age, when any one may have an encyclopædia at hand, in his own house, at the cost of a few shillings, and so there is no longer the same necessity to burden one's memory with vast masses of comparatively valueless facts which one can at any moment look up in a book.

It may be that there will come a time, in the future when we shall be more practical—when we shall

devote less time to book learning, and more to developing our boys and girls into useful citizens and capable subjects of our King. Already, the Boy Scout movement is tending in the right direction—making our children handy, competent, self-dependent. Every child ought to be able to *do* things—able to read and write, of course ; but also to swim, to ride, to climb, to sing, to draw, to build a fire, to cook a simple meal, to render first aid to the wounded, to find his way anywhere by means of sun and stars, to cultivate the ground, to use all simple tools—generally speaking, to be efficient and serviceable, able and willing to give, at any moment, any help that may be needed.

From that ready helpfulness many other good qualities will come ; a boy who is constantly watching for opportunities to be useful will be honest, true, unselfish, kind-hearted, to man and beast ; one who is thoroughly capable will also be manly, courageous, and courteous. These are the attributes which the World-Teacher will need when He comes ; for He will want not preachers only, but doers—men who will spread His doctrine of love by example, as well as by precept—capable men who will put His new commandment into practice. And these men who will gather round Him are the boys of to-day, and the training that shall fit them to serve Him is in our hands now. Let those who are responsible see to it that this matter is not neglected.

I would recommend all who are interested in this subject to read *Education as Service*, by the Head of the Order of the Star; and also a beautiful little book called *Flowers and Gardens*, by Mr. C. Jinarajadasa. All members of the Order of the Star who have children should give them the opportunity of joining the new organisation of the Servants of the Star, through which they will come into touch with other children who are interested in the same subject, and may learn how to do much useful work.

(FROM THE "HERALD OF THE STAR.")

(FLOWERS AND GARDENS.)

"They consider themselves put upon their honour always to consider 'the weed in a man' as purely an accidental survival, and as no part of the man at the actual moment. Whatever evil he has done, they feel it their duty to think of the man as not having done it. Not that they are blind to facts and do not note the consequences of the evil done; but they have a strange belief that the past is not irrevocable and changeable. They believe that the past can be changed, for one and for all. They do not think of atoning for the past by future service; they plan to change the past so that the evil shall not have been done.

The whole thought is so novel and so revolutionary of present conceptions that it is not easy to make it clear. As an instance of what these people do about changing the past, suppose a man has committed a crime, a judge will decree what he must do in some special kind of service to counterbalance the disservice he has done to the state. There is no idea of punishment in their law, the main idea is that of adjustment, the restoration of a balance disturbed. But while the balance is being restored, while the culprit is actually at work restoring it, all—the judge, the public, the culprit himself think of the past as not having happened in that particular way, to issue in a disservice; each on the other hand, according to his knowledge, as it were pulls out the threads in the design that has been woven on the loom of time, and substitutes therefor new threads. This, they say, is the only real Atonement, for in this way alone is the evil made null and void."

## CHAPTER VI.

### A CHILDREN'S PLAYHOUSE.

#### A DREAM OF THE FUTURE.

*By C. Jinarajadasa.*

It is a puzzle to know at times if a dream is a mere fancy or has something really true in it. Many dreams are evidently nonsense; but what of those others which on awaking seem to develop themselves and record more of their details, just as a photographic film develops in a solution? One such dream I record here.

It was a dream of a "Children's Playhouse," a place not in actual existence now anywhere, but going to exist. Of this latter I am quite sure, for it was a mysterious part of the dream. This Children's Playhouse was a building not unlike the Regent Street Polytechnic in London in appearance; it was about the same size, well built, and had all the stability of a permanent civic institution. But on the arched facade there were, in large letters, these words: "Children's Playhouse." It was a children's building, their very own in every way; and this was its purpose.

In it children were given every opportunity to play. The community that built it had realised that a child grew by play, and that its play could be so arranged as to bring out spontaneously many latent faculties of the child. The crowded condition of the cities of the West had evidently made these Children's Playhouses a necessity; parks were few and crowded, and the grown-

ups were there too much in evidence ; and besides the parks did not give the children some of the play elements they required. Hence the idea of these Houses.

The basement of the Children's Playhouse was a swimming bath ; then on another floor there was a gymnasium, not so much a stiff methodical one for drill gymnastics, as one with many curious fascinating trick mechanisms to delight boys and girls, in addition to the usual fittings ; there was a workshop of benches and tools and lathes of every kind, with tables not too high for young people, and every ingenious device for making aeroplanes and other fascinating things ; there was a sand room for little tots ; a room for indoor team play like Basket Ball ; and many many other things my mind cannot grasp. This much I know, that it was a place for children of all ages from the earliest years when they could play till they were about fourteen ; and every possible kind of play and amusement was arranged for by those in charge.

The people in charge were mostly ladies ; there were some who were like nurse-maids for the very little folks, to tidy them and look after their little bodies ; others had a special gift of story-telling, and gathered children round them and held them enthralled ; others guided the boys and girls of a mechanical turn of mind. One thing that was clear in their minds was that they were there not to *teach* the children, but to play with them ; it was their duty to develop in the child the sense of wonder and vitality.

One impression about the Children's Playhouse that I cannot forget is what the children thought of their House. It was a vivid thing in their lives. It was their club; the "Olympians" were kept out, and so a child could there sit in a corner with a book and dream, or dress himself as a Red Indian or a Pirate, or take a mechanical toy to pieces and put it together again, and do all kinds of un-Olympian things. The little tots went there, or were taken there and given into the charge of the matron, happily enough but as a matter of course; but boys and girls of ten and twelve looked forward to their hours in the Playhouse as we might to an exciting holiday. A boy would come home from school, swallow a mouthful of food, and then rush out to the Playhouse as though there the welfare of the world was at stake; and indeed it was at stake, for him, in working out some thought he had had during the day.

This was my dream; I woke up throbbing with it. Any time now, months after the dream, that I dwell upon it, more and more elements of this future 'Children's Playhouse' weave themselves into my imagination. And I like to dwell on it, because the world is slowly awakening to sweetness and light, and I think the children will come to their own. If every ward of every city could have a "Children's Playhouse," within two generations we could close most of our prisons; we now expect grown-ups to play the roles of men or women, as ideal citizens, when they have not had their chance of playing their roles as boys and girls; in our

schemes of civic training we put the cart before the horse and then deplore that we make no headway and that human nature is not better. Let us give what the children want above all things, next to healthy bodies, and that is play; let us with our wiser heads guide their play energies; let us organise ourselves a little for their benefit; and then we shall find that human nature is divine nature and not less, and that in the happy vitality and the bright smile of a child we can see something of a Divine Child that once played with cowherds and lay in a manger.

C. JINARAJADASA.

The ideal of Education can only be thoroughly grasped by those who know that reincarnation is a law of Nature, or, at least, believe in it sufficiently to let it shape their conduct. To a lesser degree, those who believe in heredity, as taught by Darwin and Clifford, may realise what a child really is, but those who see in the spirit embodied in the child a new creation, fresh from the hands of God, with no past behind it, must always remain in an unintelligent confusion as regards any theory of education.

To us, who know reincarnation as a fact, the child is a spiritual intelligence, embodied in a mental, emotional, and physical body; the body is new, and its characteristics are the outcome of his past experiences, and are, therefore, interesting and instructive.

The mental equipment brought out of the past, indicates the results of past mental experiences, and the stage of evolution reached, and the line along which further education may best proceed. The emotional qualities similarly mark the stage reached in moral evolution, while the physical body shows the limitations imposed on the manifestation of these powers, the limitations which may gradually be pressed back to some extent, but cannot be transcended. In the child's brain exist the number of cells which will serve him as mental instrument; these cannot be increased in number, though they may send out processes, may grow in complexity; they are the limit set by Karma for this life in the body, and naught may avail against this physical boundary.

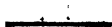
A. B.



### Our Attitude towards Children.

What is your attitude towards your children? Remember that these are egos, sparks of the divine life. They have been entrusted to you, not that you may domineer over them and brutally ill-treat them, and use them for your own profit and advantage, but that you may love them and help them in order that they may be expressions of that divine life. What an outpouring of love then you ought to feel! How beyond all words your patience and compassion should be! How deeply you should feel the honor of being trusted to serve them in this way! Remember always that you are not the older and they the younger, but that as souls you are all of about the same age, and therefore your attitude must not be that of a selfish and cruel dictator, but of a helpful friend. You do not regard your friend differently when he puts on a new coat; remember, therefore, that when you meet a child you are meeting a soul wearing a new coat, and you should try by perfect kindness and love to draw out the best that is in it, and to help it to fit on its new coat. Remember always that true good means good for all and that good is never gained at the cost of suffering to others. That which is so gained is not really good at all.

*Inner life.*



**CHAPTER VII.**

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**EDUCATION IN THE ATLANTEAN CIVILISATION  
OF ANCIENT PERU.**

All education was absolutely free, and its preliminary stages were exactly the same for all classes and for both sexes.

The children attended preparatory classes from an early age, and in all these the boys and girls were taught together. Something corresponding to what we now think of as elementary education was given in these, though the subjects embraced differed considerably. Reading, writing, and a certain kind of arithmetic, indeed were taught, and every child had to attain facility in these subjects, but the system included a great deal more that is somewhat difficult to classify—a sort of rough and ready knowledge of all the general rules and common interests of life, so that no child of either sex arriving at the age of ten or eleven could be ignorant of the way in which the ordinary necessities of life were obtained, or of how any common work was done. The utmost kindness and affection prevailed in the relation between teachers and children, and there was nothing in the least corresponding to the insane system of impositions and punishments which occupies so prominently baneful a position in modern school life.

School hours were long, but the occupations were varied, and included so much that we should not think

of as school work, that children were never unduly fatigued. Every child, for example, was taught how to prepare and cook certain simple kinds of food, how to distinguish poisonous fruits from wholesome ones, how to find food, and shelter if lost in the forest, how to use the simpler tools required in carpentering, in building, or in agriculture, how to make his way from place to place by the positions of the sun and stars, how to manage a canoe, as well as to swim, to climb, and to leap with amazing dexterity. They were also instructed in the method of dealing with wounds and accidents, and the use of certain herbal remedies was explained to them. All this varied and remarkable curriculum was no mere matter of theory for them; they were constantly required to put the whole of it into practice; so that before they were allowed to pass out of this preparatory school they had become exceedingly handy little people, capable of acting for themselves to some extent in almost any emergency that might arise.

They were also carefully instructed in the constitution of their country, and the reasons for its various customs and regulations were explained to them. On the other hand, they were entirely ignorant of many things which European children learn; they were unacquainted with any language except their own, and though, great stress was laid upon speaking that with purity and accuracy, facility in this was attained by constant practice rather than by the observance of gram-

mathematical rules. They knew nothing of algebra, geometry or history and nothing of geography. A certain definite standard in all these varied qualifications for good citizenship had to be attained before the children could pass out of this preliminary school. Most of them easily gained this level by the time they were twelve years old; a few of the less intelligent needed several years longer. On the chief teachers of these preparatory schools rested the serious responsibility of determining the pupil's future career; or, rather perhaps, of advising him as to it, for no child was ever forced to devote himself to work which he disliked. Some definite career, however, he had to select, and when this was decided, he was drafted into a kind of technical school, which was specially intended to prepare him for the line of life that he had chosen. Here he spent the remaining nine or ten years of his pupilage, chiefly in practical work of the kind to which he was to devote his energies. This characteristic was prominent all through the scheme of instructions; there was comparatively little theoretical teaching; but after being shown a thing a few times, the boys or girls were always set to do the thing themselves, and to do it over and over again until facility was acquired.

There was a great deal of elasticity about all these arrangements; a child, for example, who after due trial found himself unsuited for the special work he had undertaken, was allowed, in consultation with his teach-

ers, to choose another vocation and transfer himself to the school appropriate to it. Such transfers, however, seem to have been rare; for in most cases before the child left his first school he had shown a decided aptitude for one or another of the lines of life which lay open before him.

Every child, whatever might be his birth, had the opportunity of being trained to join the governing class of the country if he wished it, and if his teachers approved. The training for this honour was, however, so exceedingly severe, the qualifications required so high, that the number of the applicants was never unduly large. The instructors, indeed, were always watching for children of unusual ability, in order that they might endeavour to fit them for this honourable but arduous position, if they were willing to undertake it.

There were various vocations among which a boy could make his choice, besides the governing class and the priesthood. There were many kinds of manufactures—some with large openings for the development of artistic faculty in various ways; there were different lines of working in metals, of making and improving machinery, of architectures of all sorts. But perhaps the principal pursuit of the country was that of scientific agriculture.

Upon this the welfare of the nation largely depended, and to this, therefore, a great deal of attention had always been given. By a long series of patiently con-

ducted experiments extending over many generations, the capabilities of the various kinds of soil which were to be found in the country had been thoroughly ascertained so that at the time with which we are dealing there already existed a large body of tradition on this subject. Detailed accounts of all the experiments were kept in what we should now call the archives of the agricultural department, but the general results were epitomised for popular use in a series of short maxims, so arranged as to be readily memorised by the students.

Those who adopted farming as a profession were not, however, by any means expected to depend exclusively upon the opinions of their fore-fathers. On the contrary every encouragement was given to new experiment, and any one who succeeded in inventing a new and useful manure, or a labour-saving machine, was highly honoured and rewarded by the Government. All over the country were scattered a large number of Government farms, where young men were carefully trained; and here again, as in the earlier schools the training was less theoretical than practical, each student learning thoroughly how to do for himself every detail of the work which he would afterwards have to superintend.

*(From "Man : Whence, How and Whither.")*

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**CHAPTER VIII.****THE TEACHER—A GARDENER.**

BY ERNEST WOOD.

*Secretary of The Theosophical Educational Trust.*

The teacher who is worthy of the name has always before his mind an ideal, nearer to which he constantly hopes and tries to bring the child who is in his care. Sometimes in his eagerness to 'improve' the child he may be tempted to resort to means which sin against love. I have in mind a certain Samskrit pandit, a most estimable man in other respects, who used to threaten little boys with an iron rod, and even, I fear, on occasions used it. The result was that in his village there was a revulsion of feeling against Samskrit studies on the part of the younger generation. The old teacher was very well-intentioned, but I do not know whether I can call him a good man, and certainly he was not wise. However delightful may be the joys of Samskrit study, undoubtedly when it is *forced* upon the young they revolt against it, and often acquire a dislike for it which lives with them for the full term of their years. The same remark applies to all branches of study.

There is a great fund of natural curiosity in the average child. There is no other creature which is so eager to know. But the natural want to know is often stifled in our schools; the teacher is required to teach the child much that it does not want to know, and there

is thus a war of wills for the attention of the child—the natural inclination turning the child's thoughts in one direction, and the teacher trying to attract them in another. If the teacher is particularly bright he can understand the interests and processes of the child's mind and lead him to understand the subject he is trying to teach and to glory in the conscious exercise of faculty that it involves. Every child delights in the free exercise of faculty—that is play. I have once or twice shown a few fancy memory 'feats' to boys and then taught them how to do them for themselves, and one can scarcely imagine their delight at being able to do what they thought to be impossible, and their enjoyment in the surprised admiration of their bewildered parents, who are not in the secret of the method. From the mental practice involved in their little effort of concentration by method they may be led easily into thought-control and self-control in the future. So a teacher who makes a friend of his pupil can always find out the interests of the boy and through them lead him to wider knowledge and power.

But teachers are really a very harassed class, for they have often to deal with thirty or forty children at once, and it is indeed difficult to attract the attention of all the pupils at the same time. Under the present system teaching is nerve-racking work, unless the teacher is very observant and keenly sympathetic. It becomes easier when the teacher ceases to try to force the child-



ren into a mould, and is content to let the mind open naturally, as a flower opens to the smile of the sun. He should put aside the idea that he is in any way the maker of the child's mind; no man can make a beech tree spring from an acorn or a rose grow upon the lilac bush, but a skilful gardener can make his flowers rich and beautiful and his trees straight and strong by the exercise of his protection and care.

There are three ways of producing a beautiful form in this world. One is the way of the builder, who gathers together his wood and bricks and stone, shapes this material, and then builds it up, adding piece after piece until the erection that before existed only in his thought becomes an accomplished fact in the outer world. The second method is that of the sculptor, who takes a block of stone and chips away piece after piece until he leaves only the form that he desires to reveal. The third way is that of the gardener, who is dealing not with the coarse and unresponsive products of the mineral kingdom, but with the more refined materials of the vegetable world. He plants in his garden the tender seed, in which are enfolded possibilities of form and function beyond the brain of man to contrive or the hand of man to effect; he tends it and guards it from the encroachments of the coarser forms of vegetable life; he provides it with fragrant earth and luscious water; and presently it rises forth from the ground and opens into the full wonder of its beauty, exciting the admiration of its protector in a way that no human craft can do; until

in time it too bears seed after its kind, and what is good does thus pass to better and best.

The schoolmaster is dealing with a still tenderer flower when he takes the young under his protection. If you wish to bring forth a beautiful rose you will not in impatience drag open the bud and by main force spread out the tender petals in the way in which you think that they should go. You will leave to nature the form of the flower, knowing that if its environment be good it must blossom into something more beautiful than you can build; only you will take care to guard it and to protect it from anything that may injure its proper growth, and to provide it with the nourishment that it needs as material for its shaping.

So with the child the method of the gardener is the true one; by careful guidance and culture, by the provision of the nourishment that is needed for body and intellect and emotions, to encourage the blossoming of the divine potencies that exist in the heart and brain of the child; not the method of the builder, that would try to fix upon it characteristics from outside; not that of the sculptor, who would chisel away the qualities of the child in order to leave behind only those which he has the temerity to choose.\*

Not only is it necessary to satisfy the natural curiosity of the child, the unorganised desire to know,

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\*Vide note at the end.

and to care for the health of the growing body, but it is imperative that an appeal shall be made to the *emotions*. Now, one may say that this is generally done ; but what are the emotions to which appeal is usually made? *Pride*—that the boy may show off his trifling accomplishments, and aspire to more for the purpose of feeding his vanity ; *cowardly fear*—that he may escape the rod or the imposition, or at least the harsh words and ungentlemanly ridicule of an ill-bred teacher ; that he may not fail in an examination or find himself unequipped in the struggle for bread ; *greed*—that he may acquire the prizes so illogically associated with studies as their reward or result ; *competition* and *jealousy* and the whole breed of goblins that spring from vanity, greed and fear. There is no manliness in the emotions that are excited in the class-room ; one has to go out into the playing-field and watch the organised games to find *admiration* and even *hero-worship*, *courage*, *self-subordination* and *co-operation*.

The appeal to the emotions is necessary for the full unfolding of the flower ; the high emotions may first be excited by thrilling stories, and then only the moral lesson, which shows *why* the stirring deed was good, will find its place. In this way the young can learn to admire and even reverence all that is great and good, and develop the faculty of worship, which Emerson called “the flowering and completion of human culture” because it is the greatest uplifter of man. Formal precepts and even “moral lessons” will not suffice. They

degenerate into cant, where they do not strike root-deep in the emotional nature, and they lead in most cases to cunning, hypocrisy, and self-deception when they are not accompanied by the religious sense which is called faith, that is, confidence in the might of right and the triumph of good, the sense of a divine presence and divine power which will protect us from real harm if we associate ourselves with it in right thinking and doing. Herein lies the necessity for religious education, instruction concerning the subtle nature of man, the laws of evolution and karma, the superhuman destiny of the individual, the existence of benevolent and mighty Beings superior to man in goodness and power, ranging upwards to the indefinable God who is the apotheosis of our highest conceptions but yet remains beyond them. If the pupil learns to feel this constant presence of the Great, his emotions must of necessity develop rightly; pride will give way to joyous confidence, fear will be replaced by gratitude, greed will turn to a sense of partnership in all life, competition and jealousy will give place to fraternity, and depression will change to self-control. If the teacher, inspired with faith, lives as he teaches, if his example is equal to his precept, he can work miracles in the character of his pupil, for the young are always ready to respond to ideals. Devotion is natural to the healthy mind, and the child not yet initiated into a knowledge of the imperfection of human associations is ready to appreciate the purity of the divine intention.

But it is better not to teach religion and morals at all than to teach them as a mere formality, for precept without example and enthusiasm is of little use. Frank wickedness is in some respects admirable, but precept with a contrary example is positively ruinous—the most dangerous of combinations. A parent instructs a child in the virtue of truth; perhaps he beats the child for telling a trifling lie; a few minutes later, when he hears an unwelcome visitor come to the door, he instructs the child to go and say that he has gone to town and will not be back until late. The child draws its own conclusions, and learns the eleventh commandment accordingly. A teacher will preach *Ahimsa*, gentleness, in the Sanatana Dharma class, and then proceed to pinch the boys or pull their ears, or abuse his privileged position by sneering at them or subjecting them to ridicule. Such conduct is inexcusable. The teacher who preaches courage must not be despondent when difficulties arise; he who preaches love must not be irritated and angry; he who preaches accuracy must not himself be careless of details. Sometimes schoolmasters are hard upon boys who do not write neatly, while they themselves write so diabolically that no one but an experienced compositor can read their handwriting. Boys observe all these things, and it undermines their faith in the efficacy of the virtues which they are taught. The boy feels justified in failing where his teacher has done so, even if he does not fall into the far worse error of regarding the teaching as a mere matter of words, where

credit lies in being able to repeat the cant phrase rather than in practising the virtue, or into the equal error of supposing that the attainments are ideals of perfection which one is not expected really to reach.

Let the teacher, therefore, regard himself as a gardener, and realise that the greater part of the good or harm that he does in his garden is done by silent influence, not by the spoken word.

*(From the " Young Citizen.")*

NOTE :—The builder takes only the site of his building from nature; all the rest he can do himself according to his own choice. The sculptor can force his idea on the stone provided it is the right kind of stone—material capable of being moulded into desired shape. The gardener is face to face with a law of organic growth to which he must accommodate himself. While supplying the necessary environments of soil, manure and proper proportions of water and sunshine, doing his best to guard his plant against atmospheric changes, insects, beasts and pestilences, he must wait patiently and watch the growth taking place from within in due time. He can quicken it only to some extent, but not force a full-grown mango or walnut tree into existence by the magic of his will.

Animal life requires animal warmth in addition to all that the organic life of the plant demanded by way of food and environment. For its adaptation to the human will it requires attention from man. Fear makes it shrink; love draws out qualities of emotion and even intelligence to some extent. It has to be raised from *Tamas* into *Rajas* or self-directed activity in obedience to the will of man for whom it feels some attachment. It is not able to read or understand man as he is, though it does his wish. Man's duty to the animal is to give it proper food, loving attention and train it to do his will.

The human child has the distinct characteristic of having in him the individualised, intelligent and self-determined life principle with a crystallised record of the past behind, and the prospect of a glorious future before it. He has a sense of the high and the noble which is absent in the animal. His body, the vegetable in him, demands

proper food, clothing, fresh air, exercise and careful attention ; his emotions, the animal side of his nature, require training by loving attention ; but he, the self-determined, observant man or thinker is after his like, and wishes to express himself by the aid of it. He will return love and gratitude for the care and love you bestow, learn the lessons you teach him to the extent of his capacity ; but he, the in-dweller, is in search of the example, a noble and glorified manifestation in his parents, teachers, great men of his country, living or dead, of that, which he partly is and wholly hopes to be. This example his elders have to supply in all varieties, for he seeks to grow along *his own line*. Fear, force and repression only injure him ; sympathy, co-operation, suggestion help him. The following passage from the " Herald of the Star " emphasises the point:—

"The first thing to do, obviously, is to study the child to mark his impulses, to ascertain his tendencies, and then to co-operate with, not to coerce him. The greatest liberty compatible with his mental, moral, and physical safety should be given to him, in order that he may freely follow the guidance the ego will be seeking to exercise over his new instruments. Of vital importance is the environment of the child, for it must be remembered that he brings with him the germs of all the qualities he has acquired, and that the growth of these may be quickened or retarded, may be nourished or starved, by the influences which play upon him from without. Hence, none but the pure in thought, word, and act should come near a young child ; he should be shielded from every feeling of anger, of impatience, of unkindness, and no coarseness, no harshness, no baseness, should be allowed to come into contact with him. All that is fair and gentle, loving and encouraging, tender and brave, should surround him, and stimulate into exercise all that in him is noblest and best. Being a spiritual intelligence, he is capable in his own time of all that is great and noble for man. What he, therefore, expects his elder to do is to "allure to brighter worlds and himself lead the way."

As Mr. Arundale puts it at the end of the 3rd pamphlet of this series, the teacher has got to be the ambassador down here of the ego or the inner man.

**CHAPTER IX.****HAPPINESS IN EDUCATION.**

We have been told that love is the most important factor in education and that a teacher should have much love in his nature in order to be truly successful in his work. Simultaneously with that ideal has arisen the other, rapidly gaining ground, that education does not consist so much in the acquisition of knowledge as in the unfolding of faculties. Great educationists, like Trosbel, Dr. Arnold and Mme. Montessori, and here in India Tagore and Mr. George Arundale, have proved to us the practical value of these two theories. Yet we are still faced with almost insuperable difficulties, perhaps even more so in India than elsewhere, and foremost among those difficulties is the quality of the teachers available. The ages when children are most susceptible to a loving and gentle influence, the ages when their emotions, rather than their intellectual faculties, are unfolding, are between eight and fifteen years, and those children are mostly to be found in elementary and secondary schools. Now it is just the elementary and secondary grade teachers who are the least efficient. One need not be a B. A., nor even a matriculate, to obtain a teacher's post in such schools, and young men, or often old men, will take up teaching as a means of livelihood or to fill up time. In girls' schools, more particularly, we find Christian Indian women, with children and household duties to attend to at home, wearily performing a double share



of labour in order to add to the family income ; these women belong, almost without exceptions, to the Shudra caste. Now Trosble, Dr. Arnold and Mme Montessori are not average types, and the study of child-nature, unfolding flower like under the influences brought to bear upon it, is not possible for people of dull sensibilities and mediocre intelligence ; thus for many teachers their pupils remain closed books. As fathers and mothers in their homes, the love they are capable of feeling for children of their own does not prevent them from being impatient, ill-tempered, rough and often brutal with them ; how should they be less so, as teachers, with the children of others ? The ideal of love and wisdom makes a demand upon the teacher which—poor, tired, ill-equipped, as he often is, by nature and circumstance—he imperfectly fulfils. Therefore it is that, until the right kind of men and women alone can be recruited for this profession, until training is complete and efficient for all grades equally, until the best teachers are found in the elementary and secondary schools, as well as in high schools and colleges, a more practical working theory may be substituted, and that is the ideal of happiness.

Taking Nature as our own Teacher, we learn that the most important factor in the growth of plants and creatures is the sun ; no amount of watering, fertilising and pruning will avail growing things if the light of the sun is cut off from them. Educational authorities now fully recognise the necessity for light and air in school buildings in order that the bodies of the children may

grow strong and healthy. What, then, of their minds? The sun of the growing mentality is happiness, and without happiness its health and vigour are impaired. Harshness and an over-rigid discipline cause mental ill-health. The sun shines through a window — where is the window for the mind's sun? The teacher is the window. He should be himself a miniature sun of happiness, radiating over his class an atmosphere of joy and contentment. He will find his effort repaid, not alone by the increased mental activity of the class, and better results from the studies, but also by the sunshine which will gradually permeate his own life, as cheerfulness becomes his habit of mind. And it is not always easy — for a man with debts, a woman with children and her husband's dinner to be cooked — but only let the Board of Education impress upon them that first and foremost it requires the health and happiness of the children, only let the general public learn to select for their sons and daughters those schools where the children are healthiest and happiest, schools which have playgrounds, where time is allotted for games, where the pupils are allowed to laugh in class and no teacher is allowed to speak harshly or impose punishments, then would the teachers begin to make efforts to meet the required standard. Only a little effort is needed in the beginning, for happiness is a habit and one that is catching; one class catches it from another, and two or three teachers will permeate the school with it. School will thus become a veritable garden, and the most attractive place in the world for all within it.

It may be that you who read these lines are a Headmaster or a Headmistress of some school ; perhaps you are trying to raise your school to the grade of a secondary school, or a high school. If so, I hope it will be in a normal and natural way without sacrificing the health and temper of your teachers and pupils. You will find their happiness of greater practical value than you think, for dull classes and harassed teachers will not bring you in a harvest of alert and vigorous mentalities, whereas the cheerful and harmonious teacher reflected in his class will do so. Make it your duty to know of the private troubles and difficulties of the teachers, not only those connected with the school ; they must be guarded as much as possible from worry and fatigue, because those things re-act upon the children, and cause depression in the school atmosphere.

The realisation of this ideal to the full must necessarily be delayed until we are rid of the terror of examinations and inspections on their present footing ; for a teacher needs to realise that, no matter how profitable his instruction is intended to be, the lesson he gives is not so important as the pupils who receive it. That he cannot do under the present tyranny of curricula.

Most of all is happiness important in girls' schools, because a woman's temperament needs joy more than a man's needs it, on account of her more sensitive nervous system, and only too often are women's faces dull and expressionless, even weary, and one knows what it spells—drudgery. In a girls' school we would have a

garden as well as a play-ground ; we would have good pictures on the walls ; there would be fresh flowers every day in each class room, and on every day's time table would be an hour for drill or games. Music, drawing and religious instruction are most important studies for girls ; and the Headmistress should seek to eliminate all harsh tones and rough manners, and any unpleasant sounds or unsightly objects from the premises. If a child is pale and tired, she had better play than struggle with sums, but as things are now, she is more likely to get into the teacher's bad books. When a child arrives at school, the first thing in the morning should be a smile and not a reprimand. We can shut the late-comer out of the class ; but we must not frown at her. To lose a lesson is a permissible punishment, because it enhances the value and dignity of the lesson, but the offender must look upon it as a natural out come of her unpunctuality, and not a disagreeable contrivance to wound her feelings.

Let us remember when we are among children that the Lord of our Universe is Everlasting Youth and Joy ; that He visited us as a Child with a flute—Krishna—and as the Christ—Child who taught us that “ of such is the kingdom of heaven ”. We meet Him as a Child daily still. All joy and all beauty are His, and in every note of joy and touch of beauty we have communion with His nature.

D M. CODD,  
(*From “ New India.”*)

## CHAPTER X.

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### WHAT IS—AND OUGHT NOT TO BE—IN INDIAN EDUCATION.

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*By C. Jinarajadasa, M. A., (Cantab).*

Any one who has seen what education has achieved in other lands, and travels throughout India and notes its results here, will very quickly realise what a misfit the present system of education is in India. Naturally, the children brought up in it, and the teachers who carry it on, are not likely to be aware of what is lacking; but all others interested in education will know, what is in Indian education, and *ought not to be*. There is no Nation that has an older civilisation than this; its history is made up of the lives of its saints and sages, its statesmen and heroes and adventurers, whose characters show that Indian education once upon a time was indeed what education ought to be—that process of instruction which enables the instructed to become not Masters of Arts, but *Masters of Achievement*.

I make these strong remarks because every page I have read of Professor John Dewey's new book, *Democracy and Education*, is productive of such very strong thought. I have lived in America six years, travelling constantly and always living in American homes and observing—as one cannot help observing—American boys and girls. I have also gone through the usual mill

of English University education, and had in addition two years of Continental University life. I have also myself been a teacher in an Indian college. After all these experiences one conviction remains still unshaken, and it is this—that the type of education we want in India is not one based on English ideals, with the producing of pseudo-English temperaments, but the type that is more akin to the American. Above all things, what Indian youth require is character, which means wideawakeness to all phases of life, with the feeling of certainty that any given phase can be moulded to produce high ends.

To review such a work as this is impossible, because I should need to quote enough paragraphs to fill this whole page to give an adequate idea of what Professor Dewey has to say about education; and as Dewey is recognised as the leader of the American School of educationists, it would be necessary to quote extensively to show in full what his ideals are, I must limit myself to one part only of his discussion.

Dewey points out, as every one of us who has gone through Indian education knows, the utter lack of reality about educational method. This could not be better expressed than in these words of Dewey.

There can be no doubt that a peculiar artificiality attaches to much of what is learned in schools. It can hardly be said that many students consciously think of the subject matter as unreal; but it assuredly does not possess for them the kind of reality which the subject matter of their vital experiences possesses. They learn

not to expect that sort of reality of it ; they become habituated to treating it as having reality for the purposes of recitations, lessons, and examinations. That it should remain inert for the experiences of daily life is more or less a matter of course. The bad effects are twofold. Ordinary experience does not receive the enrichment which it should ; it is not fertilised by school learning. And the attitudes which spring from getting used to and accepting half-understood and ill-digested material weaken vigour and efficiency of thought.

Dewey well points out that practically all the failures of education are due to the fact that we have erected artificial barriers round the schools, which makes the school a geographical island of educational conventions which is separated off from the main land of work-a-day experience. In school, children must keep still, not talk, not play, not experiment, not make mistakes, and so on—the exact reverse of what they do when they are out of school. We have not yet realised that to be educated does not mean merely to know how to read and write, but also how to play ; Dewey insists, as did the ancient Greeks, that one necessary element of education is to teach us how to find methods of recreation that are worthy of a wise man and not a fool. The following words of Dewey will show how utterly unnatural we have made our schools.

The physical equipment and arrangements of the average schoolroom are hostile to the existence of real situations of experience. What is there similar to the

conditions of everyday life which will generate difficulties? Almost everything testifies to the great premium put upon listening, reading, and the reproduction of what is told and read. It is hardly possible to overstate the contrast between such conditions and the situations of active contact with things and persons in the home, on the playground, in fulfilling of ordinary responsibilities of life. Much of it is not even comparable with the questions which may arise in the mind of a boy or girl in conversing with others, or in reading books outside of the school. No one has ever explained why children are so full of questions outside of the school (so that they pester grown-up persons if they get any encouragement), and the conspicuous absence of display of curiosity about the subject matter of school lessons. Reflections on this striking contrast will throw light upon the questions of how far customary school conditions supply a context of experience in which problems naturally suggest themselves. No amount of improvement in the personal technique of the instructor will wholly remedy this state of things. There must be more actual material, more *stuff*, more appliances, and more opportunities for doing things, before the gap can be overcome. And where children are engaged in doing things and in discussing what arises in the course of their doing, it is found, even with comparatively indifferent modes of instruction, that children's enquiries are spontaneous and numerous, and the proposals of solutions advanced, varied, and ingenious.



The method of re-organising education is to bring into our schools two vital elements which characterise life outside of school; one is the experimenting with material, and the other is play. What American teachers do to bring reality into their schools will be evident when we consider the following lessons which they use:

A bare catalogue of the list of activities which have already found their way into schools indicates what a rich field is at hand. There is work with paper, cardboard, wood, leather, cloth, yarns, clay and sand, and the metals, with and without tools. Processes employed are folding, cutting, picking, measuring, moulding, modelling, pattern-making, heating and cooling, and the operations characteristic of such tools as the hammer, saw, file, etc. Out-door excursions, gardening, cooking, sewing, printing, book-binding, weaving, painting, drawing, singing, dramatisation, story-telling, reading and writing as active pursuits with social aims (not as mere exercises for acquiring skill for future use), in addition to a countless variety of plays and games, designate some of the modes of occupation.

I have often wished that some Indian philanthropist would donate sufficient money to send half dozen Indian educationists as a Commission to Japan and the United States, to study educational methods in those two countries. India is shaping herself once again into a great Nation, and her boys and girls are required to give much to her up-building; it is one of the great tragedies of Indian life today that Indian boys and

girls are given much of instruction, but not that particular instruction that is so essential to them, which is how to be ideal citizens in an ideal Indian Nation. Still, as of old, there is in this land the material out of which saints and heroes, statesmen and adventurers were fashioned once upon a time ; but there are only a few to lead the way in the fashioning. However much our English Educational Departments desire to help us, they are absolutely handicapped by the very fact of their English out-look and temperament ; England can give us political method, but not imagination ; capacity for loyal carrying out of orders, but not initiative ; cautious and practical ways of thinking, but not intuition ; strict adherence to truth, but not how to find it ; departmental efficiency, but not National achievement.

These things we must fashion for ourselves ; and since America during the last few decades has had experiences of Nation-building similar to what we have had and shall have, I cannot but feel that those seriously desiring the building of the Indian Nation should make strenuous efforts to incorporate into Indian education some of the elements that exist in American education.

( *From " New India."* )

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" Our grand business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance but to do what lies clearly at hand."

CARLYLE.

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